Prophetic Extracts

Eusebius of Caesarea (early fourth century)

SermonIndex.net / Church Fathers

Chapter 1

[...] having gone through the testimonies about our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, both his teaching and his life, it confirmed them by clear, trustworthy and true demonstrations and arguments. Only at the end did it use very brief testimonies from the divine Scriptures, which are believed both among the Jews and among us. No other line of argument was available for setting out rich proofs from those Scriptures to people who still wholly disbelieve them. The present work is different. It has been prepared for those who ought to believe the sacred Scriptures as already divine and inspired, on the strength of that earlier demonstration. It is meant to fill up what the earlier work left lacking. It contains, in summary, a collection [...] of the prophecy about our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, which it seemed good to gather into one place from [...] the old covenant. [...] and in what way the things about him were also foretold through hidden meanings [...] him and the dispensations concerning him. [...] not also [...] the things that are shown to have reached their fulfillment. [...] such things [...] and scattered, not only in prophecy [...] but laid up in the histories. [...] it will be useful to not a few.

It is not easy, except [...] through reading the Scriptures together, for all these passages to come to hand for those who want to have them on their lips and carry them in memory. It should be known that before the present undertaking I composed the Chronological Canons. I set beside them a summary of all kinds of history, Greek and non-Greek, and through these I established the antiquity of Moses and of the prophets after him. I regard the present scattered collection as following on from those works, and so, after that one, I have naturally come to this present treatise. One might fittingly compare this work to the natural diligence of the wise bee. The sacred word in Proverbs sends us to her when it says, “Or go to the bee, and see how industrious she is, and how she carries on her work as a noble thing. Kings and private persons take her labors for health. She is longed for by all and renowned, and though weak in strength, she honored wisdom and was advanced.” Prov. 6:8. That worker is testified to have honored wisdom. She gathers what is suitable from the flourishing shoots, and from the gathering and working of everything she offers her labors, as the Scripture says, for the health of kings and private persons. In the same way, I think, these Prophetic Extracts about Christ, which are a gathering of flowers from God’s meadows of the Word, will contain the same thing. They keep the well-shaped workmanship of the wax in the plain wording. The thoughts stored up in it they keep somewhere within, in secret [storing

them up], corresponding to the sweet and most healthful product of that wise bee. Which of the faithful would not agree that the saving passages about the Word of God surpass, by an incomparable excellence, every pleasure and benefit that comes through the body? They are fitted for taking in the truly profitable and healthful right teaching.

This wisdom must be cared for, not only by those who have advanced in character and are called "kings," but also by those lower down, who are only now coming to the divine Word. I think this work will be especially suited to them, so that from it they may examine closely how secure the teachings are in which they were instructed. Simple and unmixed faith has its firmest assurance when a person first lays the foundations of proof by reasoning, and so gains an exact grasp and knowledge of what he believes, for the purpose of acquiring [text lost]. [Several lines are badly damaged here. The sense seems to be that,] after each [prophecy has been set out], I decided to give, by way of introduction, a very brief and concise account concerning [the following]. [It would serve as] a refutation of those who profess to believe the Scriptures as divine, yet do not accept Jesus as the one who was prophesied. [It would also raise] difficulties for them, I mean those of the circumcision and those from the heresies, [and would overturn] whatever they may say, when they try to explain the divine sayings in a rather fanciful way. There will also be, briefly, a modest explanation of our own. Sometimes it will contain proof that the sacred predictions of God have been fulfilled in our Savior alone. At other times it will set out our own judgment about the passages to be presented.

But since we are about to take up these matters, we must first make a necessary distinction. In some places the sacred writings teach that the Word of God existed before not only his becoming man but before every created thing. They call him God, after the Father, and Lord. The preaching of the church also contains this, in agreement with the testimony of the Gospel, which says: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. All things were made through him, and without him not one thing was made." In other places they announce his two comings in advance. The first is the one in which they prophesied plainly that he would have neither form nor beauty, that he would be led like a sheep to slaughter, and, saying clearly that because of the lawless deeds of the former people he would be condemned to death. The events of the time of Tiberius show that these things belong to his first coming. The second coming is no longer like the first. It is more divine and far surpassing it in glory, and it will take place with an escort of angels and the array of heaven. The reader, if he is fair-minded, ought to hold to the apostolic preaching as a rule and a goal. It guards the teachings of the truth as complete and not to be tampered with. That is, it guards what concerns the first and unbegotten nature of the God of all, and the prior existence and service of the divine Word, which he rendered in the making of all created things, as [the text says].

[The beginning is lost.] ...apart from the four letters of the Hebrews that cannot be pronounced. By their combination they signify the name that cannot be spoken, though it is more loosely called "Lord." This name is never applied to an angelic power, as you will ob-

serve throughout the whole God-inspired Scripture, wherever "God" or the "Lord" indicated by the four-letter name is recorded as being used, and of whom. You must ask whether what is indicated should be referred to the unbegotten nature of the God of the universe, or to his Word. Scripture is accustomed to call this Word, who is the second cause of all things, both God and Lord, according to what the name that cannot be spoken among the Hebrews signifies. And so in the present passage the text says, "the Lord came down," and "the Lord said."

Given what is recorded here, someone might reasonably ask whether the reference is to one of the angels or to the first cause. It cannot be to angels. First, because here too "Lord" is taken from the title that cannot be pronounced. Second, because the text shows that he spoke to others who are subordinate to himself. On the other hand, to refer it to the Father and God of the universe is also unsuitable. It would not befit him to say, "Come, let us go down and confuse their tongue," and the words "the Lord came down to see the city" could never fittingly be said of the one who holds supreme authority. It remains to understand that the divine Word is what is indicated in the passages before us. The Father entrusted him with the providence and ordering of all things. He has never ceased, sometimes by himself and sometimes through ministering angels, to serve the Father's will in whatever contributes to the benefit and salvation of all. The matters of this passage belong to a mystical and hidden contemplation, and this is not the time to unfold them.

Chapter 3. The first recorded divine communication to Abraham was when the Lord said to him: "Go out from your land, and from your kindred, and from your father's house, to the land that I will show you. And I will make you into a great nation, and I will bless you, and I will magnify your name, and you will be blessed. And I will bless those who bless you," and what follows. The second was when the Lord appeared to him and said, "To your seed I will give this land." The third was when the Lord spoke to Abraham, after Lot had separated from him, the things that are recorded there. The fourth is the one in which it is said, "After these words the word of the Lord came to Abram in a vision by night, saying, Do not be afraid, Abram, I am your shield." And after other things: "I am the Lord who brought you out of the country of the Chaldeans." The fifth was when the Lord appeared to Abraham and said to him, "I am your God; be well-pleasing before me," and the rest. The sixth is the one in which the Lord appeared to him again, by the oak of Mamre, as he sat at the door of his tent at midday. "Looking up with his eyes, he saw, and behold, three men were standing above him. And when he saw them, he ran from the door of his tent to meet them, and bowed to the ground, and said: Lord, if I have found favor in your sight, do not pass by your servant. Let a little water be brought, and let them wash your feet." Then, after some other things, it is added that they got up from there and looked toward the face of Sodom, and Abraham went with them to send them on their way. "And the Lord said: Shall I hide from Abraham my servant what I am doing? Abraham will become a great and numerous nation, and in him all the nations of the earth will be blessed."

"For I knew that he will command his sons and his household after him, and they will keep the ways of the Lord, doing righteousness and justice, so that the Lord may bring upon Abraham what he spoke to him." Then the Lord said, "The outcry of Sodom and Gomorrah has become great." And a little later: "The men turned away from there and went to Sodom, but Abraham was still standing before the Lord. And Abraham drew near and said, 'Do not destroy the righteous together with the ungodly, so that the righteous becomes like the ungodly. If there are fifty righteous in the city, will you destroy them? Will you not spare the whole place for the sake of the fifty righteous, if they are in it? Far be it from you to do such a thing, to put the righteous to death with the ungodly, so that the righteous becomes like the ungodly. Far be it! Will the one who judges all the earth not do justice?' " And after other things the Scripture says: "The Lord went away when he had finished speaking to Abraham. And the two angels came to Sodom in the evening, and Lot was sitting by the gate of Sodom." It is worth stopping to ask who it is that is meant in these passages, the one who spoke to Abraham. Is it some ordinary angel? Or is it the God of the universe himself? Or is it a third, besides these two: the Word of God, whom Holy Scripture is accustomed to call Lord and God, next after the supreme Father and God of the universe? We should also ask which of the three men who appeared to Abraham it was to whom Abraham said, "Lord, if I have found favor before you," and again, "Far be it! Will you, the judge of all the earth, not do justice?" Concerning him the divine Scripture reports not only once but a second and a third time, "The Lord appeared to him." It uses the title "Lord," which in the Hebrew stands for the unspeakable Name, a name that is never once used of an angelic power.

When Lot, then, is recorded as saying to the angels who had come to Sodom, "I beg you, lord, since your servant has found mercy before you," the word "lord" is in the Hebrew, but it is not written with the four letters which the Hebrews use for the ineffable name of God. It is written with other syllables, the ones by which a man who is called "lord" in a relative sense, such as the master of a servant, is written among the Hebrews. But the title that is written with the four letters for the authority of God has nothing like this. In the recorded appearances of God to Abraham it shows plainly that it was not an angel, nor some divine power ranking only a little above an angel, who spoke to him, but God himself. His unspeakable utterance, this very name that appears in those passages with the four letters, was worn on the forehead by the high priest alone, on the gold plate, the thing called the engraved seal, "holy to the Lord." That it is not a matter of indifference for Scripture to use this title for angels is clear from its very careful practice. Sometimes it reports that God himself, or the Lord indicated by the four-letter name, appeared and spoke to the righteous; at other times it records that the ones seen were angels. So the one who appeared to Hagar when she was wandering was clearly an angel. It was fitting that, since she fell very far short of Abraham and could see nothing more than an angelic vision, her vision should match her condition, through the presence of an angel; but to Abraham it came through the greater appearing of God himself. The other words God spoke to Abraham would also not fit if someone tried to refer them to angels. They suit God alone to say, for example: "I will make you into a great nation, and I will bless you," and things like these.

But above all consider these words: "I am the Lord who brought you out of the land of the Chaldeans," and "I am God; be well-pleasing before me," and so on. No one would ever be so foolish as to suppose that an angel said these things. Again, when the three men came and stood by Abraham as he sat under the oak, Abraham went up to them, but he did not speak to all three. He spoke to one only: "Lord, if I have found favor before you." None of the others is shown talking with Abraham. The account did not allow servants to speak in place of the lord. Only the Lord gives answer, and he is the one who also says, "Shall I hide from Abraham my servant," and the rest. Then the men who were with the Lord, clearly the angels, turned away and went down to Sodom alone, since the Lord was not with them. (For how could the kind and gracious God take up residence among the ungodly?) He stayed on in the company and conversation of the man who loved God and was righteous. He enjoyed Abraham's talk, and he defended Abraham's very humane prayer. In that prayer Abraham said, "Far be it from you, you who judge all the earth," and so showed most plainly that he knew well and exactly that he was speaking not with an angel, nor with some lesser divine power, but with God himself. Next the account, distinguishing the matters carefully, clearly calls those who went up to Sodom angels. It adds that "the two angels came to Sodom in the evening." In what follows it records that neither the Lord nor God appeared to Lot or spoke to him, but the angels. So it is wholly clear that the one Scripture testifies appeared to Abraham was Lord and God, and not one of the angels. Now all those who want to cut apart the harmony of the old covenant with the new seize on these passages as if they had found a windfall. They think these texts clearly show that the Father of Christ, whom the gospel voice also confesses to be invisible, is different from the God of Moses and the prophets. That God, they say, appeared in various ways: now to Abraham, now to Isaac (to whom he also spoke, foretelling things like those he told Abraham), and likewise to Jacob, and perhaps also to Isaiah, who said, "I saw the Lord Sabaoth,"

and to the other prophets in the same way. But we have a different problem to raise. Even in the ancient prophets of God a divine saying is found, speaking from the person of God: "Because I am the Lord your God, and I have not changed." Again: "Do I not fill heaven and earth? says the Lord." And to Moses, when he speaks to him, he says, "No one will see my face and live." So we raise this difficulty with those just mentioned, and also with those of the circumcision, and with those who do not accept that after the unbegotten nature there pre-exists a second divinity, the Son. How is it that God, who according to these prophecies is unalterable and unchangeable, who again says he fills heaven and earth, who alone is God, and who is shown, even by the law itself, to be practically invisible ("No one will see my face and live"), was nevertheless changed? How did he, as though turning his own being around, become containable in some small parts of the earth, and get seen now by Abraham, now by the other prophets? For if these things were referred to the God of the universe, they would seem to conflict not only with the gospel voice but also with the prophetic voices, which declare him uncontainable, unchangeable, and invisible to human beings. Unless, perhaps, someone were to say that God himself was not seen by those named in the record. On that view they only had visions, so that they seemed to see and hear, but did not truly see any

of the things that seemed to appear, nor truly hear. They were deceived in these matters, and only thought and seemed to hear. But that is unfitting, and foreign to the truthful and unerring nature of the God of the universe. It is also shown to be unsustainable by what is recorded of God himself saying about Abraham: "For I knew that he will command his sons and his house after him, and they will keep the ways of the Lord, to do righteousness and judgment, so that the Lord may bring upon Abraham what he spoke to him."

Beyond dispute, then, the Lord himself speaks these words as if about another Lord. How, then, can anyone suppose that the God of the universe said them? For what other lord besides himself could the passage be speaking of? It is clear from this that what is described does not seem to fit the God of the universe. It has also been shown that it does not fit the nature of the angels. As I said, the account knows how to tell the truth about the appearing of angels, and it marks their visions clearly. If, then, these words seem to suit neither the angelic nature nor the highest, unbegotten God of the universe, only one solution remains. We keep "unchangeable," "unalterable" and "invisible" for the unbegotten being. The divine messages recorded as coming from God we then take to refer to the Word of God. We believe that in many ways, even before he became man, he appeared for the salvation of human beings and carried out the dealings with them that the divine Scriptures record. After the God of the universe, it is of him alone that we find the four-letter name used, since this divine designation also suits the only-begotten and heir of the Father. Abraham knew this well, for he was wise and was attested by God himself to be a prophet. He knew that the Father had given all judgment to the Son. So he worshipped him, and to him alone, out of all the others, he said: "Shall not the one who judges all the earth do justice?" To suppose that this was said to an angel, a being lower than the divine Word, would be unfitting and very unconvincing. But it is entirely fitting that the divine Word alone should also say, among the other things, "Shall I hide from Abraham my servant what I am doing?" and "For I knew that he will command his sons and his house after him, and they will keep the ways of the Lord, to do righteousness and judgment, so that the Lord may bring upon Abraham what he spoke to him."

It is also fitting for him to say these things as he teaches. All that people do in holiness should be referred to the reverence due to God alone, the Father of the universe. From him, while he is on earth, all good things are supplied to the godly for their benefit and salvation. The divine Word says these things as though teaching about another Lord, his own Father. For he himself confessed to his own disciples that the Father was his Lord and God, saying, "I am going up to my Father and your Father, and to my God and your God." The law and all Scripture are full of this same characteristic way of speaking by the Lord, that is, by the divine Word. He speaks as if about another Lord, and it is clear that this other is the Father. The passages in this place need much deeper study, but this is enough for our present purpose.

Chapter 4. "And Hagar ran away from her face" — that is, from Sarah's face. "And an angel of the Lord found her at the spring of water." Further on it is said a second time, "The

angel of the Lord said to her," and a third time, "The angel of the Lord said to her, 'I will multiply your seed greatly, and it will not be counted for its multitude.'" And again: "The angel of the Lord said to her, 'Look, you will conceive and bear a son, and you will call his name Ishmael, because the Lord has listened to your humbling.'" After all these words it is said, "And she called the name of the Lord who spoke to her, 'You are the God who has looked upon me.'" Now if the sacred Scripture, speaking in its own voice, had not named him "Lord" when he appeared to the wandering Hagar — in the words "she called the name of the Lord who spoke to her" — someone might have supposed that Hagar was mistaken in taking the angel for God. As it is, Scripture itself testifies that the one who gave the message through the angel just mentioned was the Lord. Being Lord and God, he fittingly spoke through him of himself in the words "I will multiply your seed greatly." It would suit God alone to say this, not an angel. It is likely that Hagar, noticing this very saying and understanding that such a voice could belong only to God, said, "You are the God who has looked upon me." Then a second time, when she runs away with her son, it is written, "The angel of God called Hagar out of heaven," and he spoke to her the words recorded there, among which is this: "For I will make him into a nation" — clearly meaning the child.

This again would not be credible if the angel were the one speaking, for the promise is once more God's. So whose name did Hagar call, "You are the God who has looked upon me," when here too the Scripture contains, for the Lord, the four-letter name used among the Hebrews? It is clear from what has already been set out: it is the Word who was in the beginning with God. He was present and watched over and ordered human affairs from the start. To those who had risen higher and were perfect men, such as Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, he gave the visions himself, in person. To those who fell short of their virtue — such as Lot, and in the book of Judges Gideon and Manoah, and others like them — he used the divine angels under him as servants and ministers, and through them he gave his promises in many parts and in many ways. So it is with Hagar too: since she was not yet able to receive a vision of the divine Word himself, he delivered the recorded oracles through the angel. And if he also appears to Jacob through angels, notice that at the start, while Jacob was still being introduced, he addressed him in this way. But when Jacob had advanced and grown to maturity, he shared his own converse with him openly and uncovered, no longer through angels and interpreters but himself in person. This was the Lord and God the Word, who holds second place in the Father's Godhead, and who thought him worthy of his own appearing.

Chapter 5. "The sun went out upon the earth, and Lot entered into Segor. And the Lord rained on Sodom and Gomorrah brimstone and fire from the Lord out of heaven." I do not think that anyone who has once believed that the holy Scriptures are sacred and inspired by God would try to invent some objection about these passages, or to speak against what has been handed down about the Word of God: that he existed beforehand with a subsistence of his own, and that before he became man he carried out the dealings of God with human beings. For here the Scripture plainly sets forth two Lords, if indeed "the Lord rained from the Lord." The same thing can be found in the holy apostle, who says, "May the Lord grant

mercy to the house of Onesiphorus," and "May he grant him to find mercy from the Lord on that day." But in these passages we should draw out a distinction between Father and Son. To the unbegotten God, the Father of all, we assign lordship and authority over all things, and over the Son himself. To the Word we assign the second place after the Father, with rule and sovereignty over everything that has come into being. Now the word "Lord" is named twice here, in the phrase "the Lord rained from the Lord." In the Hebrew it is written twice with the four-letter name. So it is most clearly agreed that this unspeakable sign is used of two persons: evidently of God, the Father of all, and of his Word. Therefore there is no longer any doubt that, wherever such a title is applied to God, it is not taken only of the unbegotten nature, but also of the Word who was in the beginning with God.

Chapter 6. In the blessing given to Jacob, Isaac says, after certain other things, this: "And let nations serve you, and rulers will bow down to you; and be lord over your brother, and the sons of your father will bow down to you." What is said to Jacob does not seem able to be applied to him at all, nor even to the people who came from him, the people of the circumcision. For what nations served him, and when? Which rulers bowed down to him? Whom were they worshiping in him? When did he become lord over his brother? Or who are the sons of his father who are said to bow down to him? Indeed, Isaac is not found to have had anyone other than Jacob except Esau alone. So why is it said in the plural, "the sons of your father will bow down to you"? I have marked these points because Christ is often called Jacob in the prophecies, as will be shown in the proper places. I suspect that these words too may somehow fit the testimonies about him. Just as the holy apostle applied what concerns Isaac to Christ, saying, "The promises were given to Abraham and to his seed. It does not say 'and to the seeds,' as of many, but as of one, 'and to your seed,' who is Christ," consider whether in the same way the words spoken here as about Jacob might fit Christ better. The lover of learning will find out whether this is so by examining each word according to the rules of allegory.

Chapter 7. "Jacob was left alone, and a man wrestled with him until morning." Then, a little further on, after Jacob says, "I will not let you go unless you bless me," the man says to him, "What is your name?" He said, "Jacob." And he said to him, "Your name will no longer be called Jacob, but Israel will be your name, because you have prevailed with God, and you are strong among men." And again, a little later: "Jacob called the name of that place 'the Form of God,' for I have seen God face to face, and my life has been saved." The Scripture then adds: "And the sun rose upon him when the Form of God had passed by." Now the Lord appeared to Abraham from the beginning and often spoke with him. Three times he is recorded as having been seen by him, and not at night but in the middle of the day. The third time, indeed, he was received as a guest by him at noon itself. To Jacob, however, he first appeared at sunset, in the middle of the night, in his sleep, as Jacob was going down to Mesopotamia. In that vision he saw the ladder reaching to heaven, with angels going up and down on it and the Lord standing firmly upon it, and he heard the Lord say to him, "I am the Lord, the God of Abraham your father," and the rest. The sequel shows that the Lord spoke this to him through an angel. The second time was in Mesopotamia, when the

Lord, who is indicated by the four-letter name, stood by him again and said to him, "Return to the land of your fathers and to your family, and I will be with you." He spoke this to him in his sleep and through an angel. Jacob himself teaches this: at the very moment of the divine voice he called Leah and Rachel, and after other things he relates to them the message he had received, saying, "And the angel of God said to me in my sleep, 'Jacob,'" and what follows, in which he says, "I am the God who appeared to you in the place of God,

where you anointed a pillar for me and made a vow to me there. Now therefore rise up, leave this land, and go to the land of your birth." After this, when he was returning from Mesopotamia, the angels of God first met him, when it was already morning. About them he said, "This is God's camp." It is likely that these were the same angels he had seen before on the ladder. Then the sun, which had set earlier, rose upon him after the passage set out above, in which the one who said to him, "Your name will no longer be called Jacob, but Israel will be your name, because you have prevailed with God, and you are strong among men," appeared wrestling with him. So after the vision the sun rose upon him. Now that he had advanced and been made perfect, God no longer spoke to him in sleep, nor at night, nor through an angel, nor even in human form. He spoke to him in the middle of the day and in the light, and said, "Rise, go up to the place Bethel, and live there." And after all this, only then does the divine Scripture testify that God appeared to him in Luza and blessed him, saying what is recorded. We will investigate at leisure how, after this, when he was about to go down into Egypt, God again spoke in a vision and by night, saying, "Do not be afraid to go down into Egypt." We have set these things out out of necessity, for they show that the divine Scripture does not record lightly, or in the case of ordinary men, that God was seen. It is not noted of Adam, nor of Enoch who was taken up, nor of Noah, nor even of Moses himself, that God appeared to any of them, although it is recorded that he spoke with them many times. Nor does the divine word introduce God as having been seen in the case of anyone else, except only Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

With Abraham, the Lord was not seen at the first time he spoke to him. He was seen at the second, and at the fifth and sixth. With Jacob, he was seen only after everything that is recorded. As for Isaac, the Lord spoke to him only twice, and it is written that he was seen by him twice, although the second time was at night. It is clear from what we said earlier about Abraham that these appearances must not be traced back to the first cause. They are the work of the divine Word, whom even those blessed and godly men were not yet able to take in. It was to these same men, to whom he is said to have appeared, that he was seen, and only after much preliminary training. Who else, then, could be the one who in this passage wrestles with Jacob, struggles alongside him, and, so to speak, fights on his side? Surely it is the holy Word of God, who spoke to the fathers in many parts and in many ways, who alone after the Father is called Lord and God. He blessed Jacob and named him Israel, adding, "because you have prevailed with God." The godly men saw the Word of God in the same way as the apostles of our Savior, who said: "That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, and which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, concerning the word of life." When Jacob beheld

this Word and Life, he went on to say, "For I have seen God face to face, and my soul has been saved."

Chapter 8. "Judah, may your brothers praise you. Your hands are on the neck of your enemies. The sons of your father will bow down to you. Judah is a lion's cub. You have gone up from the shoot, my son. You lay down and slept like a lion, and like a cub. Who will rouse him? A ruler will not fail from Judah, nor a leader from his loins, until there come the things reserved for him. And he is the expectation of the nations," and so on. We must hear these words of Jacob as spoken by the Holy Spirit, foretelling things about Christ and speaking out in his person, beginning from "Judah, may your brothers praise you." That the patriarch was not addressing just one of his sons is plain to those who attend to the Scripture, which says in narrative form: "Jacob called his sons and said, 'Gather together, so that I may tell you what will happen to you in the last days.'" So he promises to prophesy to them about things to come. It is also clear in another way that the words of the prophecy do not fit the patriarch Judah. When did his brothers bow down to him, or why? For what achievement did they ever praise him? And how could anyone fit the rest of the prophecy to him? Nor could anyone reasonably apply it to the tribe. Rulers of the people were not drawn only from the tribe of Judah. After Moses, the judges came from various tribes and continued as leaders for nearly five hundred years. After them Saul, from the tribe of Benjamin, was the first of all to be king. Only after these did kings from the tribe of Judah reign, and not even for a full five hundred years. Then, after the captivity in Babylon, men of the tribe of Levi presided over affairs for more than five hundred years, until the coming of Christ. Why, then, does the prophecy say these things about the tribe of Judah rather than about the others? So what is described does not fit the tribe either. But we know that the true Judah, who appeared in the last days, is our Savior and Lord Jesus, the Christ of God. He is the steward of the thoughts that concern him, and he was also named Judah.

In the same way he is called Israel in one respect, Jacob in another, and David in yet another, so that the name changes with the sense. So here he is called Judah. The holy apostles praised this Judah and bowed down to him, and so did all who were counted worthy of the Spirit of adoption. His hands, which we take to be a symbol for his deeds, came to be on the back of his enemies. That is, the enemies of the mind turned and fled from him. He is also called a lion's cub. This may be because of his birth in the flesh from the royal tribe and the root of David, in "the likeness of sinful flesh." Or it may be because of the divinity, which he emptied of himself when he became man. For this reason the words "from a shoot, my son, you have gone up" were fittingly spoken by Jacob. When Jacob was pointing to the Savior's birth from the shoot and root, he named him a lion's cub: "A lion's cub, Judah; from a shoot, my son, you have gone up." But when he prophesies his rising up and his falling asleep in the passion, he calls him both lion and cub in the words, "Lying down he slept like a lion and like a cub." For then he was lifted up not only as one born of a royal family but as one who was himself king. The nations confessed him to be the king of Israel, even though those of the circumcision were unwilling. It could also be said another way. He was taking up war against opposing powers and was about to destroy the one who holds the power of death,

that is, the devil. So the divinity of the Word had to be present in the one who was born in the flesh from the shoot of Jacob. Fittingly, then, the divinity is compared to a lion, because it has mastered and conquered all wild and untamable powers. The little body he took up, from the royal tribe of Judah, is compared to a lion's cub. But our adversary the devil is also like a roaring lion. Consider whether every sinner might not be called his cub, since everyone who commits sin is born of the devil. Now the Savior also came in the likeness of sinful flesh, and became a curse for us.

He also "made him who did not know sin to be sin for us." Consider, then, whether for these reasons, on some deeper account, the prophecy declares that at the time of the passion he became not simply a lion or a cub, but "as a lion and as a cub." For he himself compares his passion to that of the serpent when he says, "As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so the Son of Man must be lifted up." After this, with a hint of silence, he alludes to the mystery of his resurrection by the words, "Who will raise him up?" And it is clear to us from the conclusion who raised our Lord Jesus from the dead. Plainly it was his God and Father. Next come the words, "A ruler will not fail from Judah, nor a leader from his thighs." If we read these from another starting point, they could be said of all those of the Jewish race who led the people. The sense of the passage would then be something like this: the rulers and leaders appointed over the Jewish people will not cease until the one comes who is the cause of the nations' expectation, that is, Christ. When he comes, those rulers must fail. If that is so, let us look at our own times and see whether kings and leaders can be found now. But it is plain to everyone that the Jewish nation, along with the rest, is subject to the Roman governors of the provinces, and that not one of its own people has been entrusted with the authority to rule. This began from the time of our Savior's birth. For up to King Herod we find in the histories that Hebrews, from among the Hebrews, ruled the whole nation. From Moses himself they led in succession: first those called judges, then the kings down to the captivity in Babylon. After that the high priests took over the rule and kept it until the reign of Augustus. In his time Herod, the first of foreign descent, was entrusted by the Romans with the kingship over them, and in that time our Savior and Lord Jesus Christ was born.

From that time until the present, then, it is plain that ruler and leader have failed among the Jews. It is clear, therefore, that our prophesied Savior has come. From his time not only have the Jewish rulers failed, but also all the worship carried out by them at Jerusalem according to the law of Moses. And the expectation of the nations, those who have taken refuge through him in the God of all, plainly began to be fulfilled in fact from the time of his coming, according to the prophecy of Jacob. This is so if we read the words "A ruler will not fail from Judah" as a separate beginning. But if we join the passage in hand to the thought before it, as following from it, then Judah is understood as the Christ, in line with what has already been set out. In that case "a ruler will not fail from Judah" should be taken of the rulers and leaders of the church after Christ. The prophecy says they will not fail until what is laid up for him comes. It is as if it said more plainly: until what is laid up for him comes, when the end has arrived and he receives the kingdom over all things. That the

divine Spirit also calls the disciples of Christ "leaders" is clear from what is said of Judah: "But you, a man of like soul, my leader and my acquaintance." We must pay attention to these things. Those who have believed the sacred words as divine and true must not be alarmed at all, nor let their faith be shaken by the persecutions that come from time to time. This applies above all to the present one, which has blown against us more fiercely than any before it. It has done such things against the churches and all the people as no one has recorded, either from Scripture or from the tradition of the ancients. We say this because it might seem that the present persecution has brought about the very opposite of what has been said. There seems now to be no gathered assembly, and no order of the church's rulers. But the God-inspired Scripture does not lie. So we must be convinced that those mentioned have not failed altogether, even if they seem to some to have failed.

For the God who said to the prophet, "I have left for myself seven thousand men who have not bent the knee to Baal," when the prophet supposed he alone was left and the rest had been destroyed, is the same God who now watches over those worthy of his care. He keeps for us too a remnant according to the election of grace, those who are guarded by him and seen by him alone. Of them we ourselves might say, "If the Lord of Hosts had not left us offspring, we would have become like Sodom and been made like Gomorrah." To think that those who lead the word, whom the prophecy calls rulers and leaders, have failed completely is quite impossible. For a limit was set on their not failing: "until what is laid up for him comes." That is, what the Father promised to the Christ when he said to him, "Sit at my right hand until I make your enemies a footstool for your feet." At that time every knee will bend, of those in heaven, on earth and under the earth, and every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord. Then too the expectation of the nations, of those who at the present time have believed in him, will have its season to receive the promises it hoped for, in the kingdom of heaven that it awaits. So much for these matters. As for what follows, beginning with "binding his foal to the vine," it depends on an allegorical interpretation. We will leave it to lovers of learning to investigate. We have already said more than enough, not in keeping with the purpose we set ourselves, but of necessity, to give a clear account of this passage.

From Exodus. 9. "And Moses was shepherding the sheep of Jethro, his father-in-law." And a little later: "And they came to the mountain of God, Horeb. And an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a flame of fire." And after other things: "And when the Lord saw that he was coming near to look, he called him out of the middle of the bush, saying..." And again: "And the Lord said to him: I am he who is." And after a great deal more: "And God spoke to Moses and said to him: I am the Lord, and I appeared to Abraham and Isaac and Jacob, being their God, and my name 'Lord' I did not make known to them; and I established my covenant with them," and so on. In these passages it is recorded with great care that it was not the Lord but the angel who appeared to Moses. Through the angel the Lord speaks, as through an interpreter, and so teaches that the one speaking is not some lesser power but the very One who is. He shows more clearly who "he who is" is when he says, "I am the Lord, and I appeared to Abraham and Isaac and Jacob, being their God, and my name 'Lord' I did

not make known to them." To me this seems to carry the following sense: "To you, for the time being, I declare my name and say only this: I am the Lord. To your fathers I did not make known my name, for they were worthy of a greater knowledge than that. But I myself appeared to them, and I established my covenant with them through myself." From what has already been set out, it is plain who it was that appeared to the fathers. For when the matter was examined in that way, the argument showed that he is the God Word who was in the beginning with God. So the same one appears now as well, but not in the same way as to the forefathers.

To those men, as greater and more perfect, he appeared himself, and through himself he established his covenant with them. But in Moses' case it was not the Lord who appeared but the angel; and it was no longer the angel who called him but the Lord. For the Lord was the one giving the orders, and the angel the one serving the divine words. That is why the holy apostle cries out so wonderfully, among other things, "ordained through angels by the hand of a mediator," and, "For if the word spoken through angels proved firm..." So an angel is clearly introduced, and the Lord speaks through him. Nor could you find even once, in the whole of the lawgiving, the Scripture noting that God or the Lord appeared to Moses. That is said, as it plainly appears, only of the three patriarchs. From this it is clear that the whole lawgiving was handed down to the people of that time as to those who were children in their souls and were only being introduced to the faith, given to them as though through tutors and stewards. Divine things were hinted at to them in types, images and symbols, because they could not take in the more hidden and spiritual teaching. They were, after all, like children brought up in Egyptian ways and still needing much correction. So they were told that God is fire, according to the words, "Our God is a consuming fire." That is never said of the patriarchs. Moreover, when he commands them to purify themselves so that they may see the glory of the Lord, it is not said simply, as it was of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, that God appeared to them. These very things are written down with great terror and spectacle: "And it happened on the third day, as morning came, that there were voices and flashes of lightning and a dark cloud on the mountain, and the sound of the trumpet was very loud, and all the people in the camp trembled."

"Moses led the people out of the camp to meet God, and they stood at the foot of the mountain. Mount Sinai was wrapped in smoke, because God had come down on it in fire. Its smoke went up like the smoke of a furnace, and all the people were greatly amazed. The sound of the trumpet grew louder and louder. Moses spoke, and God answered him with a voice. The Lord came down on Mount Sinai, to the top of the mountain, and the Lord called Moses," and so on. These words testify that the Lord came down. They do not say again that he was seen, which is something kept for the patriarchs alone. So the Lord was present, but the sight that appeared was not of himself. Clearly it was of the angels who surround him as his bodyguard. Through them he usefully made the sight fearful and overwhelming for the people. His purpose was to strengthen in them reverence, fear and faith in himself, so that they would guard and keep the laws about to be handed to them. That the angels who served the Lord at the giving of the law were many, Moses himself shows in the blessings, where

he says: "The Lord has come from Sinai, and has shone upon us from Seir; he hastened from Mount Paran with the ten thousands of Kadesh; at his right hand were angels with him," and so on. For this reason Stephen in the Acts, addressing the people, says: "You who received the law by the ordinances of angels, and did not keep it."

From Exodus, 10. "The angel of God who went before the sons of Israel moved away and went behind them. The pillar of the cloud also moved from before their face, and went and stood behind them. It came in between the camp of the Egyptians and the camp of the sons of Israel." Then in what follows, the divine Scripture teaches what the cloud was. It says: "The Lord said to Moses: Look, I am coming to you in a pillar of the cloud, so that the people may hear me speaking to you and may believe you." And again: "God went before them by day in a pillar of cloud, to show them the way, and by night in a pillar of fire, to give them light." And again: "The Lord came down in a pillar of cloud." From these passages it is clear that the angel who went before the sons of Israel was one thing, and the cloud was something other than that angel. The cloud was a bodily instrument of the Lord himself. By nature he is without a body and beyond every material, perceptible being, yet through it he thought fit to speak with his servant by a voice that could be heard. And the Lord himself gives Moses the reason for this arrangement when he says: "so that the people may hear me speaking to you, and may believe you."

But with the people, who were more bodily in their nature, he spoke through an audible voice. With the patriarchs, who needed neither a cloud nor a pillar of fire, the manner of the appearing and of the speaking to them was different. That it was not some angelic power speaking through the cloud, but God himself, is shown, besides what has already been demonstrated, by the following passage of Scripture: "And the Lord said to Moses, Go and lead the people to the place I have told you of. Behold, my angel will go before your face." And again: "And the Lord said to Moses, Go up from here, you and the people," and so on, "and I will send my angel with you before your face." It would not be fitting to say these things to an angel. They are said only to God, the Lord who is indicated throughout the whole history by the four-letter name. Then did the Maker of all things, the God of the universe, come down so far as to ride upon a physical mountain and to walk along with men like a tutor, he who fills heaven and earth? Or is this neither possible nor holy even to imagine? Is it more reverent, and also possible, to understand it of the divine Word, who serves the Father's purpose? For since the Father himself is Lord, "Jacob became his portion, and Israel the measured share of his inheritance." The Word cared for them as one cares for a portion and an inheritance. He emptied himself, and reduced his native greatness, so as to move among men for their salvation even before he became man.

If we look carefully and with a fair mind, we will find him at one time applying the commands to his own person, as when he says, "You shall not appear before me empty," and "An altar of earth you shall make for me," and "I will come to you and bless you." At another time he speaks as if of another Lord, namely his God and Father. In the Decalogue, for example, he says: "You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain," and "On the

seventh day is a sabbath to the Lord your God; for in six days the Lord made heaven and earth," and "the Lord blessed the seventh day." And again: "Honor your father and your mother, that it may go well with you, and you may live long on the land which the Lord your God gives you." How could it fail to be clear that these things in the Decalogue were spoken, as is believed, not through an angel but by the Lord himself? He was teaching the people reverence toward his own Father, the One on high, and the God of all.

11. "Behold, I am sending my angel before your face, to guard you on the way, to bring you into the land which I have prepared for you. Pay attention to him and listen to him. Do not disobey him, for he will not shrink from you; for my name is upon him." The Lord lays these things down for the people along with the rest of the ordinances. Now if, after the death of Moses, the same Lord who spoke in the desert had not been present with the people, and one of the angels had led them instead, there would be nothing to investigate in these passages. But the history shows that even after Moses died the same Lord spoke to Joshua. He says plainly in his oracles to him: "As I was with Moses, so I will be with you, and I will not abandon you or overlook you. Be strong and take courage; for you shall apportion to this people the land which I swore to your fathers to give them." Throughout the whole Scripture, no angel at all appears as present with Joshua or speaking to him. It is the Lord himself, the one who is indicated in Moses by the four-letter name. And it seems to me that he is the same as the one who appeared to Joshua once only, in the form of a man. For just as it is recorded that he appeared to Abraham and to Jacob, so here too he declares himself, in order to teach his servant not to think of him as the first and unbegotten God, but as the commander-in-chief of that God's power. Now if throughout the whole Scripture of Joshua no angel at all is named as present, but only the Lord himself, who is indicated through the whole legislation of Moses—

Scripture bears clear witness when it says, "And the Lord was with Jesus." Of whom, then, could it be said, "Look, I am sending my angel before your face, to bring you into the land that I have prepared for you"? It seems that these words point to no one other than Jesus himself. For he brought the people into the land of promise, as the words of God to him also show: "Be strong and courageous, for you shall divide to this people the land which I swore to their fathers." God is then giving the people advance instructions about him: "Pay attention to him and listen to him; do not disobey him." We should not be surprised that he called him an angel, since the prophecy also gives John this title: "Look, I am sending my angel before your face, who will prepare my way before you." But if the passage set out above refers wholly to Jesus the son of Nave, see what the Lord says of him: "For my name has been called upon him." What name could that be, if not the name Jesus itself? For the name Jesus did not belong to that man at the time. He was formerly called Ause. Moses was the first to name him Jesus. He was inspired by God and was plainly moved by a more divine Spirit. In this way the oracle, "my name is upon him," would be fulfilled in the Lord who was speaking. I have often shown that this Lord is the pre-existent Word of God. Jesus was the name that Moses gave to Ause. Scripture, with great exactness, bears witness to this. It preserves the detail that Moses gave him this name at the very time when he was

sending him out as an angel, in keeping with the oracle, to look over the land of promise ahead of the people.

So by these things Moses clearly appears to have known the title of our Saviour Jesus. In the passages we are examining, the name Jesus is found first with him. In the same way he is also seen to be the first to proclaim the name Christ. Before his time, from the beginning of the age, no one had yet been called by either name, Jesus or Christ. And he evidently honored these titles with divinely guided reasoning. To two men who stood out above all the people and were distinguished before God, and who already had names of their own, he attached these two titles. One was his own brother Aaron. The other was the son of Nave, who had earlier been called Ause. By the nod of God he had appointed them rulers over the whole nation, and he honored them with the titles of our Saviour Jesus Christ. He called Aaron "Christ" because of the image he bore of the true high priest of all things, the very Word of God, who was with God in the beginning. And he named his own successor "Jesus" because of the way he saved, himself also a type of our Saviour Jesus. When the worship handed down symbolically through Moses came to an end, and Moses died, our Saviour took over true devotion to God [in the same way]. In war he conquered and subdued all the invisible powers that opposed his word. The whole earth, among all the nations, had been held under tyranny by those powers. He made it his own possession and gave it as an inheritance to his own people, through the churches throughout the whole world.

12. Whenever Moses went into the tent, the pillar of cloud would come down and stand at the doors of the tent, and the people would stand and worship, each one from his own tent. And the Lord spoke to Moses face to face, as one might speak to his friend. Then Moses would return to the camp, but his servant Joshua son of Nun did not leave the tent. And Moses said to the Lord, "Look, you tell me, 'Lead this people up,' but you have not shown me whom you will send with me. Yet you have said to me, 'I know you above all others, and you have found favor with me.' So if I have found favor before you, show yourself to me plainly, so that I may see you and know you, so that I may be one who has found favor before you, and so that I may know that this nation is your people." And he said, "I myself will go before you and give you rest." And Moses said to him, "If you yourself do not go with us, do not lead me up from here. For how will it be known that I and your people have found favor with you, unless you go with us? Then both I and your people will be glorified above all the nations on the earth." And the Lord said to Moses, "I will do this word also that you have spoken. For you have found favor before me, and I know you above all others, and you have found favor with me." And Moses said, "Show me your glory." And he said, "I will pass before you in my glory, and I will call out the name of the Lord before you. I will have mercy on whom I have mercy, and I will show compassion on whom I show compassion." And he said, "You will not be able to see my face, for no human being will see my face and live." And the Lord said, "Look, there is a place beside me, and you will stand on the rock. I will cover you with my hand until I have passed by.

Then I will take away my hand, and you will see my back parts, but my face will not be seen by you," and so on. After this the text continues: "And the Lord came down in a cloud and stood there beside him, and he called out the name of the Lord. And the Lord passed by before his face and called out, 'The Lord, the Lord, a God compassionate and merciful, slow to anger, abounding in mercy, true, keeping righteousness, showing mercy to thousands, taking away lawless deeds, injustices and sins; yet he will not clear the guilty, bringing the lawless deeds of fathers upon children and upon children's children, to the third and the fourth generation.' And Moses hurried, bowed to the ground and worshiped, and said, 'If I have indeed found favor before you, Lord, go with us, face to face.'" Moses is recorded as speaking to God with as much boldness and freedom as a man would show when talking with his friend. These words show that the prophet had made no ordinary progress. But although the Lord spoke to him face to face, he had not yet been seen by him in the way he appeared to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. For this reason Moses makes his request: "If I have found favor before you, show yourself to me plainly, so that I may see you and know you." By this he shows that God did not grant him appearances in the same way as he spoke to him. For suppose someone thinks that God's speaking to him face to face is the same as being seen by him, face to face, so to speak. What room would then be left for Moses' request, "If I have found favor before you, show yourself to me plainly, that I may see you"? And how, if he had already seen him face to face, as one might suppose, does the Lord go on to say to him, "You will not be able to see my face, for no human being will see my face and live"?

But why was it so? Let anyone say who wishes: not even once does the text testify that the Lord appeared to him, as it is careful to say in the case of the patriarchs. Instead, these passages make it plain that although the Lord spoke to him face to face, he spoke to him through the cloud. The Scripture establishes this beforehand when it says, "The pillar of the cloud came down and stood at the doors of the tent, and spoke to Moses." So he spoke through the cloud. He did not appear to Moses in the same way as to Abraham, Isaac or Jacob. To those men he is recorded as appearing openly and plainly, without any outward form. To Moses he appeared through what is called a form, and through the cloud, which the text also calls the glory of the Lord. It says: "When Moses was speaking to the whole assembly of the sons of Israel, they turned toward the wilderness, and behold, the glory of the Lord appeared in a cloud, and the Lord spoke to Moses." And again: "Moses went up the mountain, and the cloud covered the mountain. The glory of the Lord came down on the mountain, and the cloud covered it for six days. On the seventh day the Lord spoke to Moses from the midst of the cloud. The appearance of the glory of the Lord was like a blazing fire on the top of the mountain." These passages clearly say that what Moses saw was not the Lord himself but a form of the Lord: a cloud and a fire, which the text also calls the glory of the Lord. So he saw the form of the Lord and his glory, but by no means the Lord himself, nor the Word who was speaking, who is the Lord's own. Even so, he heard the one who spoke through the cloud. That is why it is said, "The Lord spoke to Moses face to face." It is not recorded, however, that he appeared to him face to face. Moses asks for this

as something that had not yet happened, when he says, “Show yourself to me, that I may see you plainly.”

In another place too the text teaches that God spoke to him mouth to mouth, but that he was not seen in the same corresponding way. He was seen in a form and through his glory, which was already given. The text says: “The Lord came down in a pillar of cloud and stood at the door of the tent of testimony. Aaron and Miriam were called, and both came out. He said to them, ‘Hear my words. If there is a prophet among you to the Lord, I will make myself known to him in a vision, and I will speak to him in a dream. Not so with my servant Moses; he is faithful in all my house. I will speak to him mouth to mouth, in a form and not in riddles, and he saw the glory of the Lord. Why were you not afraid to speak against my servant Moses?’” So Moses saw the glory of the Lord, who gave him answers in a form, and he heard the Lord speaking mouth to mouth. But he had not yet seen the Lord himself, as the fathers had. It is no wonder that God is recorded as speaking to Moses mouth to mouth, since Moses teaches in Deuteronomy that God spoke face to face to the whole people as well. He says: “The Lord did not make this covenant with your fathers, but with you, who are all here alive today. The Lord spoke to you face to face on the mountain out of the midst of the fire.” Still, even if he addressed Moses and the whole people in this way, notice what is said. He is said to have spoken to them mouth to mouth and face to face. It is not said that he appeared to them without the fire or the cloud, as he did to the fathers. For the Lord is recorded as appearing to those men openly, without the covering of cloud or fire. And our Savior and Lord teaches that seeing God belongs to the perfect, those whose mind has been purified to the highest degree. He says, “Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.”

For this reason the Lord proclaims himself as God to such men, saying to Moses: “You shall say this to the sons of Israel: The Lord, the God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob, has sent me to you. This is my eternal name, and a memorial for generation after generation.” Moses was zealous for the greater gifts and longed for the same progress as those men. So he asks the Lord, “Show yourself to me, that I may see you plainly [or: so as to know you].” As God the Word spoke with him, he could picture the greatness, the height, and the unspeakable and unreachable excellence. But he saw that the visions given to him came through serving angels. So he begs the Lord to show himself to him more clearly and purely. He no longer wanted it through coverings or through other servants. He wanted it openly, in the way it had been for Abraham and his company, without the form of fire and cloud. This, it seems to me, is what the words mean: “Show yourself to me, that I may see you plainly.” He had also heard the Lord say beforehand, “Behold, my angel will go before your face.” He half declines this, because he longs for the greater thing, and says: “Unless you yourself go with us, do not lead me up from here.” The Lord agreed to his request and said, “I will do this word also, which you have spoken.” Moses saw how ready the divine generosity was, how the kindness of God runs ahead of those who long for great things. Then he made himself small. He did not think himself yet worthy of the greater things, and he put forward another request, which

was lacking compared with the first: "Show me your glory." The Lord fulfils his request: "I will pass by before you in my glory, and I will call out in the name of the Lord before you," and so on. By this he teaches that the knowledge of the Father and God of all is greater than every vision Moses had seen before. He promises to hand this knowledge over to him. Speaking of himself he says, "I will pass by before you in my glory."

But about the initiation into the mystery of the Father he says, "and I will call out in the name of the Lord." For of what Lord does he promise to call out, since he himself is the Lord who is made known by the four-letter name? Surely he promises to call out the name of the Father. And it is true that unless the Word of God first passes through someone, and unless he himself calls out the Father, it is not possible in any other way to receive the knowledge of the Father of all. For no one has known the Father except the Son, and anyone to whom the Son may reveal him. He himself, then, is the door and the way, and only through him is it possible to see the one who is beyond all things and the highest cause of all, the Father himself. For the divine Word does come first to the souls of the blessed, like a forerunner of the Father, and shares his own glory with them. But he does not stop there and take all authority for himself. When he has prepared the dwelling and made it ready, he steps aside and hands the kingdom over to God and Father. He himself admits this when he says, "I will pass by before you in my glory, and I will call out in the name of the Lord." Here he promises in words that he will do this. Next he adds the deed itself, where it says: "And the Lord came down in a cloud, and stood by him there, and called out in the name of the Lord. And the Lord passed by before his face and called out, 'Lord, Lord, God, compassionate and merciful, slow to anger, and abounding in mercy, and true, and keeping righteousness, showing mercy to thousands, taking away lawlessness and injustice and sins, and he will not clear the guilty; bringing the lawlessness of fathers upon children, and upon children's children, to the third and fourth generation.'" The Lord who is made known by the four-letter name says these things, having come down in a cloud and stood beside Moses. As he promised, he passed by before his face and called out to his own Lord and Father, the one who truly is Lord, "Lord, Lord," the name given twice in the four-letter form. He says, "Lord, Lord, God, compassionate and merciful," and so on.

But suppose someone forces the point and says that it was not the Lord but Moses who said these things. Let him take firm assurance from the words of Moses himself, who acknowledges that the words set out above belong to the Lord. In another place he prays and says, "And now, Lord, let your hand be lifted up, just as you spoke when you said: The Lord is slow to anger, abounding in mercy and true; he takes away lawlessness, injustice and sins; and he will not clear the guilty by any cleansing, but repays the sins of fathers upon children to the third and fourth generation." By these words, then, the Lord himself, who spoke the words set out above, shows most plainly and clearly that he is calling upon one greater than himself, the One who is truly Lord. It is evident that this is his own Father. Or if someone is slow to accept this, let him say whether he can bring some other explanation to bear on these passages. He must still hold that the speaker was not an angel but the very Lord who is indicated by the four-letter name. Scripture records that this Lord spoke with Moses face

to face. Moses also asked him, when he declined the guidance of angels, "If you yourself do not go with us, do not bring me up from here." But these things cannot be referred to anyone other than the God the Word alone, who was in the beginning with God. To Moses, who was reaching for great things, he disclosed the knowledge of the greater One. He was teaching Moses to know the only true God, and the God the Word whom that God sent, who is himself second after the Father, both Lord and God. The first and most necessary benefit he gave Moses was this: that Moses would never transfer his thoughts about the God of all onto the Word who spoke with him, because of the surpassing glory of what he saw. So he taught Moses to hold as first and only true God the one whom he himself called upon, saying, "Lord, Lord, God, compassionate and merciful, slow to anger, abounding in mercy and true."

Notice carefully the word "true," which is used in much the same way in the words "that they may know you, the only true God," spoken by the same Savior in the Gospels. The whole people could not have taken in such things. To them, as people being introduced to the faith, the one who spoke said, "I am, and there is none besides me." They still needed an elementary introduction to the single rule of God. They were in no condition to work out the teachings about the Father and the Son, since they had only recently left the polytheistic error of the Egyptians. The words "I am, and there is none besides me" can be taken as spoken in the person of God the Word, like the words "I and the Father are one" and "I am in the Father and the Father is in me." Just as the one who has seen him has seen the Father, according to the saying "The one who has seen me has seen the Father who sent me," so in the same way the one who heard him heard the Father who is in him, speaking the words "I am, and there is none besides me." We have said these things, in a matter of such weight, because we want to show that beyond dispute the one who spoke with Moses was neither the God of all nor some angelic power. He was the divine Word himself. We firmly believe that he is, after the Father and Lord of all, second of all beings, both God and Lord. The evangelist John teaches us this more plainly when he says, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." It would take a great deal of time, more than we have now, to explain what the place and the rock are, of which the Lord said, "Behold, there is a place beside me, and you shall stand upon the rock." But the apostle made clear what the rock is when he said, "and the rock was Christ."

I take the place to be none other than the rock, and to be the same place that met Jacob, where it is written: "Jacob went out from the Well of the Oath and journeyed to Haran. And he met a place." There he saw in a vision the ladder and the Lord fixed upon it. When he woke he said, "The Lord is in this place." And again he said, "How fearful is this place! This is nothing other than the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven." But what is the face of God the Word, which Moses, that is the law, cannot look upon, since the law is human and rather bodily? What are his back parts, which only the law, typical and symbolic of spiritual realities, could take in? And how is it that he says, "I will cover you with my hand"? A covering and veil was laid upon the law, so that because of this veil it could see the things behind but not the things that lead the way and surpass them. Whoever cares to

investigate these matters will understand them if he gives his attention to them privately, at the proper time.

From Numbers, the third prophecy of Balaam. 13. "A man will come out of his seed, and he will rule over many nations. The kingdom of Gog will be exalted, and his kingdom will be increased. God led him out of Egypt; his glory is like that of a one-horned beast. He will devour the nations of his enemies and suck the marrow from their fatness, and with his darts he will shoot down the enemy. He lay down and rested like a lion, like a lion's cub. Who will raise him up? Those who bless you are blessed, and those who curse you are cursed." This is Christ, who was born according to the flesh from the seed of Israel and who rules over many nations. For what nation has not known subjection to him, now that the word of his disciples has gone out into all the earth, and their words to the [seeds] of the inhabited world? Among very many of the barbarians themselves one can see many who have come through faith in him to the knowledge of the one God, and who for devotion to him have endured every kind of punishment, even death. So this prophecy too clearly reaches its fulfillment in our Savior. Or let someone else come forward and show to whom else it could be applied. For us it is plain that the Savior's spiritual kingdom and lordship grows day by day among the souls that have received his word. The kingdom of Gog was also exalted at his coming. Some have taken this to be the rule of the Romans. Others take it figuratively, as the heavenly way of life according to the gospel and the contemplation of spiritual teachings, and for this reason they understand "Gog," which is translated "houses," to be the sign of it. Furthermore, "God led him out of Egypt." This is so in the plain sense when Joseph, having received a message, took Mary with the child Jesus out of Egypt and returned to the land of Israel. In this the prophecy now before us was fulfilled, together with the prophecy in Hosea, which according to the Hebrew and the translation of Aquila says, "Out of Egypt I called my son."

It was also fulfilled in a spiritual sense, when the Father took him up from the spiritual Egypt and from the places here below, and led him to the heavens. The so-called "glory of the unicorn" hints at the deity in the Savior, which belongs to the Father's sole rule. After this it says, "He will eat the nations of his enemies." All the nations that have come under his teaching were once part of his enemies. After they believed in him, he made them fit, as it were, to be food for himself. He thins down and searches out their "fatness," that is, everything material and earthly that has grown together with them. Through his own farming he produces in them nourishing fruits. He did this with spiritual and rational arrows, shooting down his own enemy, the one who ruled the nations long ago, that is, the devil. The words that begin "He lay down and rested like a lion" were said almost word for word by Jacob also, in the prophecies about Judah. We will not repeat what sense they have, since we have set it out in the passages already before us. It is plain how we who bless the Christ of God have been blessed. Even if the Egyptians loathe us, as they did God's people of old, this too is fulfilled in us: "The more they humbled them, the more numerous they became, and they grew very, very strong." It is also plain how those who cursed him from the beginning received the curse, by saying "Crucify, crucify him." For the cross belonged

to a curse, as in "Cursed is everyone who hangs on a tree." But he who endured their curse has been raised high by the Father. Those cursed by God himself have received lasting destruction for ever. If anyone examines this closely, he will see the greatness of God's power, which still pursues those once cursed by him. So much for the words, "Those who bless you are blessed, and those who curse you are cursed."

"A star will rise out of Jacob, and a man will arise out of Israel. He will break the rulers of Moab and plunder all the sons of Seth." The Word of God emptied himself, took the form of a servant, and was found in appearance as a man. He rose as no small star, not merely for Jacob but out of Jacob. He began with the bodily people of the circumcision, and then shone on all the nations. When he moved on from them, he fought no small wars. He cleared away the opposing powers and the spiritual forces of wickedness. Having defeated them, he took plunder for his own inheritance, winning back the nations that had earlier been under those powers. About these the Father promised him, saying, "Ask of me, and I will give you the nations as your inheritance, and the ends of the earth as your possession."

It is Moses who says: "The Lord your God will raise up for you a prophet from among your brothers, like me. You shall listen to him in everything, just as you asked of the Lord your God at Horeb on the day of the assembly, when you said, 'We will not go on hearing the voice of the Lord our God, and we will not see this great fire any more, so that we may not sin.' And the Lord said to me, 'They are right in everything they have said. I will raise up for them a prophet from among their brothers, just like you. I will put my word in his mouth, and he will speak to them as I command him. And whoever does not listen to everything the prophet speaks in my name, I will take vengeance on him.'" Whom from Israel could anyone show to be this prophet like Moses, that is, a lawgiver, raised up for the human race, other than Jesus alone, our Savior and Lord? He has been revealed to all the nations as the lawgiver of the new covenant, the way of life according to the gospel. This fits the prophetic prayer in a psalm: "Set a lawgiver over them, Lord; let the nations know that they are men." He also redeemed from the spiritual Egypt, from its brick-making and from bitter slavery under the spiritual Pharaoh, those who have come to the God of all through him.

In short, everything that Moses is recorded to have done in bodily form, our Savior and Lord carried out according to the spiritual law. So the prophet has come, the one whom Moses foretold, and who is still famous among both Samaritans and Jews. God testified about him in advance, saying, "And the man who does not listen to everything the prophet speaks in my name, I will take vengeance on him." Vengeance has indeed been taken. The blood of all from Abel to Zechariah, who was murdered between the temple and the altar, was avenged on the generation that rose up against the Savior. This was especially so for those who dared to cry out against him, "Crucify, crucify him," and "Take such a man from the earth. His blood be on us and on our children." That very thing happened at once. God, just as he had said, took vengeance for the blood of Christ on those people themselves and on their children. Justice also pursued them, so that from that time until now the whole nation has not been able to lift up its head at all. Another prophecy was fulfilled too, that of

Amos, who says, "The house of Israel has fallen; it will not add to rise again." The apostle also foresaw these things by the Spirit and cried out, "But the wrath has come upon them to the end."

From the Song: "Rejoice, you heavens, together with him; let all the angels of God worship him. Rejoice, you nations, with his people, and let all the sons of God strengthen themselves in him." To whom else would the divine Spirit command the angels to bow down, if not to Christ? Clearly, at his coming the nations rejoiced with his people, the company of the righteous patriarchs and prophets. In the same Song, God speaks again about these nations, as though addressing another people: "They made me jealous with what is no god; they provoked me to anger with their idols. And I will make them jealous with what is no nation; with a senseless nation I will provoke them to anger." It is plain that after the rejection of those people, God chose the foolish things of the world to put to shame those who were wise among them. He chose the weak things of the world, the lowborn, the despised, and the things that are not, to bring to nothing the things that formerly counted among them. For from the time of Moses himself they had been serving idols, and provoking God to anger and jealousy, and when his Christ came they did not receive him. But the nations, through him, came to know the Father and God of all, and according to the prophecy before us, they will rejoice with his people of the saints. All the sons of God also strengthened themselves in Christ: both those who earlier prophesied about him, and all who after his coming received the Spirit of adoption and proclaimed him throughout the whole world. So much, then, for the passages from the Pentateuch. Let us now move on to the Scriptures that follow.

From the book of Joshua (Jesus). "And it happened, when Jesus was in Jericho, that he looked up and sees a man standing opposite him, with his sword drawn in his hand. And Jesus went up to him and said, 'Are you ours, or one of our adversaries?' And he said to him, 'I have now come as commander-in-chief of the power of the Lord.' And Jesus fell on his face to the ground and said to him, 'Master, what do you command your servant?' And the commander-in-chief of the Lord says to Jesus, 'Take the sandal off your foot, for the place where you are standing is a holy place.'" Who else could the commander-in-chief of the power of the Lord be, but the Christ of God, who rules over all God's holy and spiritual army? See also whether these words to Jesus hint that this is the same one who spoke to Moses on the mountain through the angel. For what is said to Joshua now was said in the same way to Moses by the Lord, through the angel, as he began his vision: "Take the sandal off your feet," and so on. The Christ of God has many names, and here he is called commander-in-chief of the power of the Lord. So also in Isaiah he is called "Angel of Great Counsel," in the passage that follows "and they will wish they had been burned with fire": "For a child has been born to us, a son has also been given to us, whose government is upon his shoulder, and his name is called Angel of Great Counsel." You will also find him named "angel of the covenant" in Malachi, where it says, "And suddenly the Lord whom you seek will come to his temple, and the angel of the covenant whom you desire."

From the First Book of Kingdoms, the prayer of Hannah. "The Lord went up into the heavens and thundered. He will judge the ends of the earth, and will give strength to our kings, and will lift up the horn of his anointed." The Lord who came down from the heavens, the Word of God, has himself gone up again into the heavens. Having gone up, he thundered the proclamation of the gospel by his own divine power, so that it was heard in the whole world. He himself will judge the ends of the earth and those who live as far as its limits, since he has received all judgment from the Father. He also gave strength to his own disciples, the apostles and prophets, and to our kings. And he lifted up the horn of his anointed. This means either the people, who are called "anointed" through sharing in the Christ, or the human nature he took on, whose horn was the divinity lifted up, as the holy apostle says. And in the eighty-eighth Psalm God says something plainly similar to this about the Christ: "And in my name his horn will be lifted up."

"And a man of God came to Eli and said, 'Thus says the Lord, the Lord.'" And further on: "And I will raise up for myself a faithful priest, who will do everything that is in my heart and in my soul. And I will build him a faithful house, and he will walk before my anointed all his days. And everyone left over in the house will come to bow down to him for an obol of silver and for one loaf of bread, saying, 'Cast me aside to one of your priestly offices, to eat bread.'" This is no one other than our Saviour Jesus Christ, the only priest of God Most High after the order of Melchizedek. According to the apostle we have him as a great high priest who has passed through the heavens. He did everything that was in the Father's heart, becoming obedient to him even to death. So when the Father raised him up, he built him a faithful house: the church, made up of rational, living and truly faithful stones. Those who believe in him come to bow down to him, and the obol of silver is not refused [or: not turned away]. This is true of the widow who bodily brought her farthing to help those in need. It is true also, in the mind, of the soul that rests on faith alone, and of the soul that, according to its ability, contributes from its spiritual possessions what helps toward the building up and benefit of the rest;

So then, "God chose the foolish things of the world," and the weak, the poor, the despised, and the things that are not. He does not look down on them, nor on souls like these. In his love for humanity the Word of God also welcomes the eagerness of such souls, and by his divine judgment he assigns each to its own place among his priestly seats according to its worth, counting them worthy of the bread of eternal life from himself. The words "and he will pass through before my anointed one all the days" are said about the saints in the church. They too are called Christs, as in the words, "Do not touch my anointed ones." To these the Savior also said in the Gospel, "Look, I am with you all the days, until the end of the age." These passages need fuller explanation. For now we will be content with what has been said as briefly as possible.

From the Second Book of Kingdoms. The Lord speaks to David through Nathan, after much else, also these words. 20. "And it will be that when your days are fulfilled and you sleep with your fathers, I will raise up your seed after you, who will come from your own body,

and I will prepare his kingdom. He will build me a house for my name, and I will set up his throne forever. I will be a father to him, and he will be a son to me. And if his iniquity comes, I will rebuke him with the rod of men and with the strokes of the sons of men. But my mercy I will not take away from them, as I took it away from those from whom I took it away from before my face. And his house will be made faithful, and his kingdom will stand forever before me, and his throne will be set up forever." Similar things are said in the eighty-eighth Psalm. The Jews would do well to be puzzled over these passages. Why, I ask, would they say that God is speaking of David, or of Solomon, who reigned after him? They presumably suppose that the prophecy speaks of Solomon when it promises to make him a firstborn son. In the Psalm it says, "He will call on me, 'You are my Father, my God and the helper of my salvation.' And I will make him my firstborn, high above the kings of the earth." In the passage now in hand it says, "I will be a father to him, and he will be a son to me." Yet someone could say that David was no different from the other prophets in any respect. He even needed to make confession because of Uriah, saying, "Against you alone I have sinned, and I have done what is evil before you."

Or was it said of Solomon? The plain history of Scripture teaches that he turned away from God and bowed to idols because of his desire for women. And how did the kingdom of David, or of Solomon, stand before God "to the age," and how was his throne "set upright forever," as this prophecy says? The Psalm says much the same: "I swore to David my servant: I will prepare your seed for ever, and I will build up your throne from generation to generation." And after other words it says: "Once I have sworn by my holy place, I will not lie to David. His seed will remain for ever, and his throne will be like the sun before me." And again: "I will establish his seed for ever and ever, and his throne like the days of heaven." You would find similar words in Jeremiah, where it says: "Thus says the Lord: A man will not be cut off from David to sit on the throne of the house of Israel. And for the priests and the Levites, a man will not be cut off from before me to offer whole burnt offerings, to sacrifice, and to make incense all the days." Now suppose someone compares these words with the present condition of the Jews and with their own histories from the reigns of Hezekiah and Jechoniah. In their time the kingdom of the Jews descended from David was brought to an end, at the time of the captivity to Babylon. After that the Jews were never again ruled or governed by kings descended from David, down to this day. Then it is plain that what was said does not fit David or Solomon. Otherwise it would follow of necessity that God's prediction, made with oaths, was proved false, and that is something it is not right even to think.

But if we apply the "seed of David" to Christ, who was born of him according to the flesh, it is clear how this seed, that is Christ, will remain for ever. It is also clear how his throne and spiritual kingdom stand before the Father "to the age," set upright by him and built up from generation to generation in the souls of those who believe in him. The throne of this seed of David, who has been given to us, will remain like the sun of righteousness before the Father, and like the days of heaven. For this reason the Holy Spirit says to him in another Psalm: "Your throne, O God, is for ever and ever; the rod of uprightness is the rod

of your kingdom. You have loved righteousness and hated lawlessness; therefore God, your God, has anointed you with the oil of gladness beyond your companions." Christ also built the church as a house for the Father, out of living and spiritual stones, holy and virtuous souls. He raised up a temple far better than, and different from, the temporary building of Solomon, which no longer exists. The apostle also testifies that the words "I will be a father to him, and he will be a son to me" belong to Christ. He took the saying from here in his letter to the Hebrews, where he says: "For to which of the angels did he ever say, 'You are my Son, today I have begotten you'? And again, 'I will be a father to him, and he will be a son to me.'" The words that follow, "and if his lawlessness comes, I will rebuke him with a rod of men," were spoken about the people who have believed in Christ.

This is because the church is called the body of Christ, as the apostle says. Notice carefully that the words about visitation are spoken of those who have believed in him, since the text says "my mercy" in a plural setting: "but I will not remove my mercy from them." The psalm also says something clearly similar to this passage about the sons of the one the prophecy describes: "And if his sons forsake my law and do not walk in my judgments, if they profane my statutes and do not keep my commandments, I will visit their lawless deeds with a rod, and their injustices with scourges; but my mercy I will not scatter from them." See how the word calls the persecutions that come from time to time "rods of men" and "touches of the sons of men." Even so, God's encouragements are many, and so are the consolations in the Scriptures, which do not allow us to lose heart at the persecutions stirred up against us from time to time. For just as he foretold that he would visit the people of Christ with a rod when they sin, so he also promised beforehand not to take his mercy from them. He said, "But my mercy I will not remove from them, as I removed it from those from whom I removed it." One may ask who these were, for whom the mercy of God existed before the people from the nations, and from whom you removed it entirely. He promises to do nothing like that to the people of Christ.

21. "And David spoke to the Lord the words of this song." Then, a little further on: "And he bowed the heavens and came down, and thick darkness was under his feet." And again after this: "Deliver me from the contradictions of a people; you will set me as head of nations; a people whom I did not know served me; at the hearing of an ear they obeyed me; foreign sons lied to me; foreign sons will be cast away, and they will stumble out of their enclosures." These things are said in almost the same words in the seventeenth Psalm, and they could be examined more suitably when we gather our selections from the Psalms. For now we merely note this much. The words "he bowed the heavens and came down" can be understood of Christ's coming down from heaven. The words "deliver me from the contradiction of a people" are spoken in his person about those of the circumcision who did not believe in him; about them he also says in Isaiah, "All day long I stretched out my hands to a disobedient and contradicting people." The words "you will set me as head of nations," and "a people whom I did not know served me; at the hearing of an ear they obeyed me," are prophesied of the church from the nations. The words "foreign sons lied to me" refer to the godless heresies, which have spun false stories about the Savior himself and the God of the universe. The

word says that these will be cast away, having stumbled out of their enclosures, that is, having fallen from their festering and hidden false doctrines.

22. From the third book of Kingdoms. "And now, Lord God of Israel, let your word be confirmed, which you spoke to your servant David my father. For if God will truly dwell with men on the earth, then even the heaven of heaven will not be enough for you." Similar words are spoken in the second book of Chronicles by Solomon in his prayer to God. So here too it is clearly prophesied that God would dwell with men on the earth. This too has reached its fulfilment in our time, at the coming of Christ, when God the Word became man and lived among the human race.

From 1 Chronicles. Through Nathan the Lord says this to David, among other things. 23. "And it shall be, when your days are fulfilled and you sleep with your fathers, that I will raise up your offspring after you, who will come from your own body, and I will prepare his kingdom. He will build a house for me, and I will set his throne upright. I will be a father to him, and he will be a son to me. I will not take my mercy away from him, as I took it away from those before you. I will establish him in my house and in his kingdom forever, and his throne will be set upright forever." We have noted these words too. Since they are like the passages from the second book of Kingdoms set out above, and the difference between them is small, we will be content with what was said on those.

From 2 Chronicles. 24. "And now, Lord God of Israel, let your word be confirmed, which you spoke to your servant David: that God will truly dwell with human beings on the earth, if the heaven of heaven will not be enough for you." We said what needed saying on these words once already, when we set out the passages from the third book of Kingdoms, so we will not say it a second time now.

From Ezra. Zerubbabel says this in his speech. 25. "Men, are not women strong? The earth is great and heaven is high, and the sun is swift in its course, for it turns around the circle of heaven and runs back to its own place in a single day. Is he not great who does these things? Yet truth is great, and stronger than all things. The whole earth calls upon truth, and heaven blesses it. All works shake and tremble before it, and there is nothing unjust with it. Wine is unjust; the king is unjust; women are unjust; the sons of men are unjust; and all their works of this kind are unjust. There is no truth in them, and they will perish in their injustice. But truth remains forever and is strong forever; it lives and prevails forever and ever. With it there is no taking of persons, no partiality. It does what is just, keeping away from all who are unjust and wicked, and all approve of its works. There is nothing unjust in its judgment.

Its are the strength, the kingdom, the authority and the majesty of all ages. Blessed be the God of truth." Our Savior and Lord, who is the Word of God, is reported to have said, "I am the truth." So it was fitting to set out these words about truth, since they show that truth has a subsistence of its own alongside the Father. For he says, "Truth remains, and is strong forever, and lives and prevails; and with it there is no taking of persons," and so

on. To this he adds, speaking of the Father, who is himself God of the Word of God and of the truth: “Blessed be the God of truth.” To this we also will add our “Amen.” So much, then, from the writing of Ezra. From Esther, however, we found nothing at all on the matter before us. After these extracts from the historical writings, let us move on to the books in verse, since these come first in time before the remaining prophecies. Of these, let us look first at the passages from the Psalms.

Chapter 2

Ps. The following are the chapter headings in the second book of the prophetic extracts concerning Christ. From the Psalms. 1. From the first Psalm: on the blameless life of Christ, and on the highest virtue of his conduct. 2. On the passion of Christ, his heavenly kingdom, and the Father's promise to him concerning the nations. 3. On the passion of Christ and his resurrection from the dead. 4. On the knowledge of God sown through him among all people. 5. On the death of Christ and his resurrection from the dead, and how he is proclaimed as lawgiver of the nations. 6. On the resurrection of Christ and the salvation of human beings. 7. On the blameless life of Christ. 8. On the coming down of Christ from heaven, his establishment over the nations and the people who did not know him, and the contradiction of the Jews. 9. On the preaching of the apostles to the whole inhabited world, and on Christ as bridegroom. 10. On Christ as king. 11. Again, on Christ as king. 12. On the events of Christ's passion; on his apostles, the turning of the nations to God, and on another generation and a people that is to come. 13. On his taking up into the heavens. 14. On Christ and his resurrection. 15. On Christ as the beloved, the crushing of the former people, and Jerusalem. 16. On the resurrection of Christ. 17. On the events of Christ's passion. 18. How all things were made through God the Word. 19. How, in place of sacrifices and the old worship by types, the body of Christ was offered for all. 20. On the betrayer Judas and the resurrection of Christ. 21. On Christ as the beloved, and how the same one is proclaimed both as God the king and as Christ.

22. On the taking up of Christ and the calling of the nations. 23. On the calling of the nations, and on Christ as a man. 24. On the calling of the nations, the second coming of Christ, and the exposure of those of the circumcision. 25. On the betrayer Judas. 26. On Christ as king. 27. On Christ as a man, on Father and Son, and on the two covenants. 28. On the resurrection of Christ, the gospel of the apostles, and the nations. 29. On the events of Christ's passion and the rejection of the Jewish people. 30. On the passion and resurrection of Christ, and on the generation that is to come. 31. On Christ as king, on his kingdom from eternity and without end, and on the submission of the nations. 32. On Christ as a man and son of man. 33. On the appearing of Christ. 34. On the eternal throne of Christ, how he will come from the seed of David, and on the persecutions of the church from time to time. 35. On the calling of the nations and on Christ. 36. On the sending of the Word from heaven, the calling of the nations, and the desolation of the former people.

37. On the betrayer, and the plot against Christ. 38. On two lords, Father and Son; on the existence of Christ before the ages, his eternal high priesthood, and his passion. 39. On Christ as a man. 40. On Christ as a stone, and on the "Hosanna." 41. On the kingdom of Christ, and how it will come from David. 42. On the passion and the resurrection. 43. On the coming down of Christ from heaven. 44. On the sending of God the Word from heaven. 45. How all things were made through God the Word.

BOOK 2. Having set out the testimonies about our Savior from the historical writings, we will now gather, in this second part of the Extracts, the testimonies from the poetical books and add them next. We do so because these come first in time before the rest of the prophecies. So let us look first at those from the book of Psalms.

Psalm 1. "Blessed is the man who did not walk in the counsel of the ungodly, and did not stand in the way of sinners, and did not sit in the seat of the scornful; but his delight is in the law of the Lord, and on his law he will meditate day and night." Who could be shown to have reached such an extraordinary height of virtue that he never fell into any sin at all? That, it seems to me, is what the words mean: "he did not walk in the counsel of the ungodly," "he did not stand in the way of sinners," and "he did not sit in the seat of the scornful." By these words I think the psalm shows that the man who is called blessed is wholly untouched by sin. He did not merely refuse to walk in such company, nor, having walked, go further along; he did not even sit down, did not set foot there at all, and did not stand among them. Is that not a marvelous and rare thing? The praise of this man is also put in a form that stresses continuing action: he did not walk, he says, nor stand, nor sit among these kinds of wickedness. This shows that the blessed man's virtue was settled and constant, always and in every circumstance. One may see many who have succeeded through attention and discipline, but no one like the man the psalm describes. Consider, too, what it means to flow smoothly in everything and to prosper according to God, never stumbling and never falling away from the goal of virtue, so that the psalm says of him, "and everything he does will prosper."

Consider further what it means for someone to be so blended with the law of the Lord that his own will agrees with it, and to meditate on it not only through the whole day but also through the night, looking to it with the wakeful eyes of the mind. Consider what it means for him to act by it not only in his works and words by day but also in his thoughts and imaginings during sleep. Whoever considers this will know how great an achievement it is that the divine Spirit bears witness to. Now these words plainly surpass all human nature. They could fit only one man: the one who, according to the flesh, was born of the seed of David, Jesus Christ our Lord and Savior. Of him alone the divine Spirit in Isaiah testified that "he committed no sin, nor was deceit found in his mouth." The reading of the Hebrew confirms this interpretation, for it is carefully worded: "Blessed is the man," with the article added. It was also fitting that David, who was called the father of our Savior according to the flesh and had received the promise that Christ would be born from his seed, should dedicate to him the first fruits of his own prophecy. Anyone who wants to learn precisely

how the words of the psalm apply to the Savior will find out by consulting those who have written commentaries on it.

Psalm 2: "Why did the nations rage, and the peoples plot empty things? The kings of the earth stood by, and the rulers were gathered together against the Lord and against his Christ." The people who heard Peter and John tell of their remarkable experiences bore witness in the Acts of the Apostles that this prophecy has been fulfilled. They gave thanks for the wonders they were hearing, and then added the words just quoted: "For truly in this city there were gathered together against your holy child, whom you anointed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, with the nations and the peoples of Israel." It was not only those who plotted against our Savior at that time who gathered against him. From that day to this, kings and rulers, whole nations and peoples, have done the same, by blaspheming him and plotting against his teaching. We must be persuaded, too, that it was not only the visible kings and rulers among men who plotted against him. Much more it was the unseen rulers of this age, who are perceptible only to the mind. They were at work then, and they are at work still. The "nations" are with them, and so are the "peoples," that is, those of the circumcision, who studied God's law "to no purpose" and in vain. They plotted not only against the Christ of God, but through him against the Father who sent him. About all of these the psalm goes on: "He who dwells in the heavens will laugh at them, and the Lord will mock them. Then he will speak to them in his anger, and in his wrath he will trouble them." After this, Christ himself instructs us about the saving work that came to him after the passion, and says: "But I was established as king by him on Zion, his holy mountain, proclaiming the decree of the Lord." But we must not think, as the Jews do, with their earthbound notions, that the kingdom of Christ is like the kingdoms of men and will be set up on a physical mountain called Zion.

When he was asked whether he was a king, he answered: "My kingdom is not of this world." For this reason he also promised the kingdom of heaven to those who believed in him. And it is not only the apostle who taught that Mount Zion is heavenly; many other prophecies teach it too. Micah, for example, first foretells that because of the ungodliness of the former people, "Zion will be plowed like a field, and Jerusalem will be like a hut in an orchard, and the mountain of the house will become a wooded thicket." Then he goes on in the same way to speak of another Zion and another Jerusalem, saying: "And in the last days the mountain of the Lord will be made manifest, and peoples will come to it, and many nations will go, for from Zion the law will go out, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem." So this is the Zion that is meant here too, where Christ says, "I was established as king by him on Zion, his holy mountain." By whom was he established? Plainly by the Father who said to him, "You are my Son; today I have begotten you," and, "Ask of me, and I will give you the nations as your inheritance, and the ends of the earth as your possession." That the prophecy is true, and the promise does not lie, can be seen from how many in so short a time have come from every nation to the worship of God through our Savior. Otherwise, let those who shamelessly dare to deny the plain fact tell us to whom they could apply these words, if they refuse to accept that they are fulfilled in this way. Some have thought these

words were spoken about King David. But they could not show that David suffered anything of this kind, as though rulers and kings, nations and peoples had plotted against him. And when, and for what great deeds of valor, did the Lord say to David, "You are my Son; today I have begotten you"?

How could the words, "Ask of me, and I will give you the nations as your inheritance, and the ends of the earth as your possession," be said of David, when his kingdom was clearly confined to Israel and the borders of Judea? Let them also explain why they do not accept the Christ who has come. Is it because he suffered? Must they then look for another Christ who will suffer nothing of the kind? But how would the prophecies be fulfilled which foretell that the Christ of God would suffer very many things? They say this in many other places, and not least in the psalm now in hand. Or should we suppose that this man sowed the teaching about the God of all throughout the world without any risk to himself? Can anyone even imagine that a merely human impulse, or the plain undertaking of some chance person, could have grown so strong and so capable? Could it, by his teaching alone, without a divinity working with him, have disposed souls of every kind among his hearers toward the God of all? Could it have sown these things long ago, and still today persuade people to abandon their ancestral customs and a life that was lawless, savage and undisciplined, and to hold to godliness alone? Could it make them value that godliness above even their own property, and above life itself, which is dear to everyone? But I do not think that anyone willing to judge even moderately fairly can fail to agree that such great things were accomplished through our Saviour with the help of a divine power above human power. From these things the divinity of the Lord who became man is demonstrated. At the same time there are clear proofs that he received the nations from the Father as his inheritance, and the ends of the earth as his possession, in agreement with the prophecy now in hand. But this is not the time to go through the whole psalm, especially since it has already received a very full exposition.

Psalm 3. It is easy to take the third psalm also as speaking of Christ, in keeping with the ones before it. It teaches about the plot against him in the words, "Lord, why have those who afflict me multiplied?" It also teaches about his resurrection, which is made clear by the words, "I lay down and slept; I rose up, because the Lord will take hold of me [to help me]." Every verse of the psalm could fit Christ if it received a suitable explanation. There is also good reason why it is placed third, to foretell the resurrection of the Lord in keeping with the prophecies before it. For the first psalm, as we have explained, teaches his blameless life and his sinless way of living. The second teaches what concerns his suffering. So the third, following these, foretells his resurrection.

Psalm 8. The opening of the eighth psalm, from the words "Lord, our Lord, how wonderful is your name in all the earth," seems to prophesy the calling of the Gentiles. For this reason it is titled "For the winepresses." By winepresses we are to understand the churches throughout the world. In them the spiritual grapes of the true vine, Christ, and of his holy apostles, who are like his branches, are pressed. They yield the wine of understanding that

comes from the apostles' teachings, which produces every kind of joy. For otherwise the things said in the psalm cannot be fitted to physical winepresses. Nor does the wording contain any such meaning as it has elsewhere, whether about the vine transplanted out of Egypt, or the vineyard of the Lord of Hosts, or anything like that. The words that begin, "What is man, that you remember him, or the son of man, that you visit him? You made him a little lower than the angels, you crowned him with glory and honor," and what follows, are applied to our Saviour and Lord Jesus in the letter to the Hebrews. There, after "you put all things under his feet," it adds: "But now we do not yet see all things subjected to him. But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels because of the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honor." One could say that he was made a little lower than the angels not only because of the suffering of death but also because of his becoming man itself, when, being in the form of God, he did not consider being equal with God something to be grasped, but emptied himself, taking the form of a servant.

2:6, and he humbled himself so far that, in place of the glory he had in the form of God, it was said of him: "We saw him, and he had no form or beauty, but his form was without honor, and lacking beside the sons of men." In return for this the Father crowned him with glory and honor, exalting him highly and giving him the name above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those in heaven, on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. "And he set him over the works of his hands." This too fits the person of our Savior, because the God the Word is in him, but it no longer fits any ordinary person. For the sacred writings are accustomed to count even the heavens among the works of God, as in the words, "and the heavens are the works of your hands." Besides this: "He put all things in subjection under his feet, all sheep and oxen, and also the beasts of the field, the birds of the sky, and the fish of the sea." By these words it seems to be indicated, in a more allegorical way, that the more irrational kinds, like beasts, that is, lesser souls or even opposing powers, are brought under the yoke and the service of the Word.

Psalm 9. Chapter 5. The title of the ninth psalm is this: "To the end, for the hidden things. A psalm of David." In place of this Symmachus has published: "A victory song, concerning the death of the son. A song of David." The Hebrew seems to read this way, and more fully: "Lamanasse Almuth ben, a psalm of David." It is a fine thing for those of the circumcision who use this psalm to be at a loss over what death, or which son, the psalm was spoken of to David. For to us it is plainly a prophecy of the Savior's suffering. It seems that the Seventy also understood this, and that it was hinted at in a more veiled way. Aquila, for his part, also showing that some great act of manly courage took place in the Savior's suffering, published it as: "To the victory-maker of the youthful vigor of the son. A song of David." And anyone who pays attention could apply all the words of the psalm to Christ. He calls himself needy and poor, and he prophesies about his resurrection from the dead in the words: "Have mercy on me, Lord; see my humiliation from my enemies, you who lift me up from the gates of death, so that I may declare all your praises in the gates of the daughter of Zion." Which Zion is meant, we showed a little earlier. The psalm also prophesies about the nations who

would be saved through him, as if they were poor and needy in him. Among these words is this: “Set a lawgiver over them, Lord;

let the nations know that they are human.” Here it is worth pausing to notice that the nations are not subject to the law of Moses. This saying should also be brought forward against those of the circumcision who accuse the believers from the nations for not living by the law of Moses. And it should be shown that the prophetic word knew that there would be another lawgiver for the nations besides Moses, since it says, as in a prayer, “Set a lawgiver over them, Lord,” clearly meaning over the nations. It adds to this, “let the nations know that they are human.” It is as if it said: let the nations receive knowledge and understanding of their rational nature through the lawgiver who is to be set over them. This would be Christ, who gave us the common covenant when he said, “It was said to the ancients such and such, but I say this.” By a divine and unspeakable power he has been able to make his laws strong, not in one nation or two, nor in some part of the whole world, nor for only a short time. From the very working of that power one can see that it holds continually and among all the nations. But if anyone will not accept that this is so, let him show whom else he could name, other than our Savior and Lord Jesus Christ, as a lawgiver set over the nations by the God of all, in keeping with the prophecy in hand, one who has become a teacher to all people of reverence toward the Maker of all.

Since the Lord says in the eleventh Psalm: “Because of the misery of the poor and the groaning of the needy, now I will rise up, says the Lord; I will set him in safety, I will speak boldly in him,” we ask whether this too might fit the person of Christ, who is teaching about his own resurrection from the dead. The sense would be something like this. For the sake of the nations, who were in the misery of wickedness (they are called “poor” by way of reproach, because they were deprived of riches toward God), I emptied myself and took up the struggle on their behalf even to death. Now I will rise. Having received from the Father authority over all, I will set all who have believed in me in salvation, and I will speak boldly in him, that is, either in the Father, or in what I have accomplished for salvation through so many brave deeds. That would be the sense of this verse. As for the opening words of the Psalm, “Save me, O God, for the godly man has failed,” and what follows, these show what the time was like when he suffered. For at that time the godly man had failed, and truths had grown few among the sons of men; each one spoke empty things to his neighbor. Everything that follows these words was fulfilled in that very time.

“I saw the Lord always before me, because he is at my right hand, so that I may not be shaken. Therefore my heart was glad, and my tongue rejoiced, and my flesh also will dwell in hope. For you will not abandon my soul to Hades, nor will you let your holy one see corruption. You made known to me the ways of life; you will fill me with gladness with your face.” That these words also refer to the person of Christ, Peter bears witness in the Acts of the Apostles, where he says: “Jesus the Nazarene, a man shown to you by God with powers and wonders and signs, which God did through him in your midst, as you yourselves know — this man, handed over by the determined plan and foreknowledge of God, you took, and nailed up by

the hands of lawless men, and killed. God raised him up, loosing the pains of death, since it was not possible for him to be held by it. For David says, 'I saw the Lord always before me.'" Then, after saying some things in between, he adds these words exactly: "Men, brothers, I may speak boldly to you about the patriarch David, that he both died and was buried, and his tomb is among us to this day. Being a prophet, then, and knowing that God had sworn to him with an oath that one from the fruit of his loins would sit on his throne, he saw ahead and spoke about the resurrection of the Christ, that he was neither abandoned to Hades, nor did his flesh see corruption." Since Peter has thus given the interpretation of the prophecy as applying to the Savior, it remains for anyone who does not treat this inquiry as a side matter either to apply every word of the Psalm to him in keeping with what Peter has taken it to mean, or to read what others have written in commentary on the Psalm. For our purpose does not allow us to say anything more on these passages than what has been said.

The words said in the sixteenth Psalm, "You have tested my heart, you have visited me by night, you have refined me by fire, and no injustice was found in me," we have marked as the voice of Christ, since it is not otherwise fitting for human nature to say this. And all the words in the Psalm can be referred to the Savior by anyone who examines them carefully.

Psalm 17 (verse 9 of our extracts). Those of the circumcision will think that the seventeenth Psalm is spoken by no one other than David, because its title seems to point that way. But we will press them, since they cannot make this fit him: "You will rescue me from the contradiction of the people; you will set me as head of nations. A people whom I did not know served me; at the hearing of the ear they obeyed me. Foreign sons lied to me; foreign sons grew old." Which nations can they show David was set over as head? Or what is this people that he had not known before, yet which served him and obeyed him at the hearing of the ear? And who are the foreign sons who lied to him, who grew old and limped away from their paths? But for us nothing at all in what the psalm says is a stumbling block when it is spoken in the person of Christ, who was set as head of the church from the nations. People who take the prophecy this way see it plainly fulfilled. For we were, truly we were, alienated from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers to the covenants of the promise, and for that reason unworthy of the knowledge of the word of God. But now that we have known God, or rather have been known by him, we who were once far off have become near.

We served the one who long ago did not know us, and we obeyed him at the hearing of the ear, receiving the word of his new covenant, which he made with us. Wonderfully, after the words "A people whom I did not know served me," which speak of our calling, the psalm sets out the matter of the former congregation through the words "Foreign sons lied to me." This is equivalent to "I begot sons and raised them up, but they rejected me." These also grew old, limping away from their paths, because they did not accept the Christ of God. Rejected by them, he was set by the Father as head over the nations that served him and obeyed him at the hearing of the ear, in accordance with the prophecy that says elsewhere, "The stone which the builders rejected has become the head of the corner." I think too that the opening

of the Psalm makes clear his deity and his coming down to human beings. These things are said in a more hidden manner and would need more than a passing, hurried explanation. They are the words from "And he bowed the heavens and came down, and darkness was under his feet; and he mounted upon the cherubim and flew, he flew on the wings of the winds," and whatever else of this kind is referred to the Word of God.

Psalm 18 (verse 10 of our extracts). "There are no speeches or words whose voices are not heard. Their sound has gone out into all the earth, and their words to the ends of the world." We ask whose sound has gone out into all the earth, and whose words to the ends of the world, so that no words or speeches are left anywhere without their voices having been heard. No one could point to any others than the holy apostles, in whom the prophecy has been fulfilled. Their teaching about Christ became famous throughout the whole world under heaven. For living in this world, with the divine power working with them, they proclaimed throughout the whole world faith in the Christ of God. After this prediction of the preaching of his apostles, the text goes on to teach about him, that "in the sun he set his tabernacle." By the sun we are to understand his divinity, in which he made his dwelling and, as it were, his tent. Or it may mean the body that he took from the virgin, which was like a tent for the divine power remaining in him.

This same one, like a bridegroom coming out of his bridal chamber, "rejoiced like a giant to run his course." Like a bridegroom, he rose up from the Father's bosom for the sake of his bride, the church. Like a brave and mighty giant, he fought through the contest set before him, conquered and overcame his opponents, and rejoiced to receive his partner and bride. "His going out was from the end of heaven," and again, "his arrival was to its end." For no one else has gone up into heaven except the one who came down from heaven, the Son of Man. And again, in the words of the holy apostle, "the one who came down is himself also the one who went up above all the heavens." And "there is no one who will be hidden from his heat." Of this heat he himself said, "I came to cast fire on the earth, and what do I wish, if it is already kindled?" Anyone can easily work out the rest of the passage for himself on the same lines.

The words in the nineteenth psalm, "Now I know that the Lord has saved his anointed," point to the salvation from death of our Savior Jesus Christ. It was also said to him, "Let us rejoice in your salvation." And the whole passage could be applied to him, once it receives a fitting explanation.

The words "Lord, in your power the king will be glad," and what follows, one could say may refer to David. But "He asked you for life, and you gave him length of days forever and ever" no longer fits David. His death is plainly shown, and the span of his life, which was not stretched out over a long time of years. So the king would be Christ, who was set by the Father to reign on the heavenly Mount Zion. He asked the Father for life, not for himself, since he himself was the life, but for all who would believe in him. And the Father gave it to him, so that all who believe in him can pass over from death into eternal life, and into the length of days with God, which are forever and ever. The rest of the psalm is said as

about the king's glory, and it is no small matter. It would fit Christ rather than David, once it receives the explanation it deserves.

All who have a sound faith in Christ clearly agree on this. The opening of the psalm before us, which runs, "My God, my God, attend to me; why have you forsaken me?", was spoken by him at the time of his suffering. His cry on the cross showed this: "Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani." But before we begin to take the prophecy in the psalm as applying to him, let us ask those who boast in circumcision who the speaker of the psalm could be. For he is clearly no ordinary person, among the other things he says, when he says: "You are the one who drew me out of the womb; my hope was on you from my mother's breasts; I was cast upon you from the womb; from my mother's belly you are my God." And he goes on: "I will declare your name to my brothers; in the midst of the church I will sing your praise." And again: "He did not turn his face away from me, and when I cried out to him, he heard me. My praise is from you; in the great church I will confess you; I will pay my vows before those who fear him." Besides these, let them also say whether they can apply the other things in the psalm to any of the holy men. For who has ever become such a one as the word described beforehand: "All who saw me sneered at me"? Or about whom did they speak with their lips and shake their heads, saying, "He hoped in the Lord; let him rescue him, let him save him, because he delights in him"? About whom is it said that many calves, and of what kind of nature, along with dogs and fat bulls, surrounded him, and opened their mouth against him like a lion tearing its prey and roaring?

And then, who was it that the assembly of evildoers surrounded? They surrounded him so closely that they pierced his hands and feet, counted all his bones, and divided his garments among themselves, casting lots for his clothing. For the speaker in the psalm describes things like these. After suffering all this, he goes on to say: "I will declare your name to my brothers; in the midst of the congregation I will sing your praise." Let them also resolve these things, and explain the rest of the psalm along with them, especially from the words "All the ends of the earth will remember and turn to the Lord, and all the families of the nations will worship before him," down to "A coming generation will be proclaimed to the Lord, and they will proclaim his righteousness to a people yet to be born, whom the Lord has made." Let them point out the generation that did not yet exist at that time but is foretold as coming in a future age. Let them point out the people who did not yet exist, but who are foreseen as being born in later times. And let them say what they would make of the church formed from all the nations through Jesus Christ our Savior. Among so many multitudes who have come to know the God of all through Christ, would they not admit that these words have been fulfilled: "All the ends of the earth will remember and turn to the Lord," and "All the families of the nations will worship before him"? It is time for those who are willing to judge fairly to admit that the prophecy was fulfilled in no one else but only in our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. At his coming the turning of the nations began, and the prophesied generation arrived. The people yet to be born is foretold not only here but also in the hundred-and-first psalm, in the words: "Let this be written for another generation,"

"and a people being created will praise the Lord." This is the people of whom it was also said in Psalm 17: "A people whom I did not know served me; at the hearing of the ear they obeyed me." So this is our Savior and Lord. He took on flesh, and because of it he was called a "worm," one who became "the form of men" and "the contempt of the people." "All who saw me mocked me." This was above all at the time of the passion, when the prophecy reached its end, and those passing by blasphemed him and mocked him, saying, "He saved others; let him save himself." Then too "they spoke with their lips and shook their heads" against him, saying in these very words, "He hoped in the Lord; let him rescue him, let him save him, because he delights in him." For the Gospels record that these very things were said against him at the passion. So it fits him, and him alone, to say to the Father: "You are the one who drew me out of the womb; you are my hope from my mother's breasts; I was cast upon you from the womb; from my mother's belly you are my God." Beyond this, the text teaches us that certain evil and beastlike powers also worked the plot against him. This is why he said, "Many calves have surrounded me; fat bulls have hemmed me in." And about the assembly of the circumcision that rose up against them, he says, "Many dogs have surrounded me; an assembly of evildoers has hemmed me in." These also "dug through" not only his hands but his feet. Or, according to Aquila, who said, "They shamed my hands and my feet." And this was truly fulfilled when they hung him on the cross and drove nails through his hands and his feet.

It is good, if anyone asks for proof from Scripture that Christ was foretold to endure the cross, to bring forward, along with other passages that show this, the words "they pierced," and even more the reading "they shamed my hands and my feet." What follows is: "They divided my garments among themselves, and they cast a lot for my clothing." Aquila rendered it like this: "They will divide my garment among themselves, and they will cast a lot for my clothing." Symmachus: "They shared out my garments among themselves, and they drew lots for my clothing." This too was fulfilled at the time of the passion. Those who crucified him took his garments and made four parts, one part for each soldier, and the tunic as well. The tunic was seamless, woven from the top all the way through. So they said to one another, "Let us not tear it, but let us cast lots for it, to decide whose it will be." The evangelist adds: "so that the Scripture might be fulfilled": "They divided my garments among themselves, and for my clothing they cast a lot." So much for that prophecy. Concerning [it], the Hebrew contains something like "anna" [text uncertain]. In keeping with this, the psalm goes on, just as the Gospels do, with the words "Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord." This seems to me to mean something like: "Save, we beg you! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord," the Father and God of all.

"The Lord swore to David a truth, and he will not set it aside: 'From the fruit of your womb I will set one upon your throne.'" And again: "There I will make a horn spring up for David; I have prepared a lamp for my anointed. I will clothe your enemies with shame, but upon him my holiness will blossom." Here too a promise about Christ is clearly given to David, with an oath from God: that Christ would be born from his offspring and would take his throne. The passages involved would need a great deal of examination, since Christ does not

appear to have sat bodily on David's throne and kingdom. We will put that aside, because it does not belong to the present work to spend our time on an exposition of the psalm that departs from the purpose we have set. But we should reason fairly. If one passage cannot be applied to Christ in a bodily way, we must not therefore brush aside the many places where Scripture speaks plainly about him. Rather, following the true account and standing by the divine Scripture itself, we should pay attention to how it prophesies at one time that he will come poor, cheap and dishonored, having neither form nor beauty, and at another time calls him an honored king. Some of these things can be fulfilled bodily, others only according to the spiritual sense of Scripture, and some we must expect to be fulfilled at his second coming. Still, our Lord was also called King of the Jews at his first coming, and not by mere chance, for Pilate ordered that this be written on his cross in Greek, Latin and Hebrew letters: "This is the king of the Jews."

Psalm 141, verse 7. The words spoken here, "The righteous will wait for me until you repay me," seem to be spoken in the person of the Savior. For whom else will the righteous wait until God repays him, if not this one? It is said somewhere of the righteous of old that, though they were well attested, they did not receive the promises, because God had foreseen something better for us, so that they would not be made perfect apart from us. It is clear that the verse looks to him, because the psalm also foretells the events of his passion, in agreement with the other prophecies. For it is written: "I will pour out my prayer before him; I will declare my affliction before him. When my spirit failed within me, you knew my paths. On this road where I was walking they hid a snare for me." And again: "Rescue me from those who pursue me, for they have grown stronger than I am." After these words he prays about his resurrection from the dead, and says: "Bring my soul out of prison, that I may give thanks to your name." To this he adds: "The righteous will wait for me until you repay me." So all those righteous people waited for Christ until the Father should repay him, because he emptied himself and became obedient to him even to death. What would the Father repay him with, if not the nations as his inheritance and the ends of the earth as his possession? The purpose is that when the full number of the nations has come in, then all Israel too may be saved. The whole psalm could also be applied to Christ, since it contains the events of his taking on human nature, in which he was plotted against.

Psalm 143. In the psalm now in our hands it says, "Lord, bow the heavens and come down." In the seventeenth psalm it says, "And he bowed the heavens and came down." I noted the verse there, and here too I did the same, understanding that these things are said about the Word of God. For by bowing the heavens, that is, by emptying himself of the heavenly glory in which he was in the form of God, he came down to the lower parts of the earth, because of the plan of salvation he took on for the sake of human salvation. For this reason, before the verse quoted, the word says in wonder: "Lord, what is man, that you have been made known to him, or the son of man, that you take account of him?" For to this end the Word of God bowed the so-called heavens and came down: that by becoming man he might be made known to the human race, which had previously been ignorant of him. And he did not despise the one who had become the son of man, counting him as nothing, that is, every

rational soul made in the image of God. You may also understand the rest of the psalm in a spiritual sense.

Psalm 147. I decided to mark this verse also: “He sends his word to the earth; his word will run swiftly.” Here too the Scripture teaches that the Word of God is a real subsistent being, distinct from the Father who sends him. Notice how the verse goes on: “his word will run swiftly.” This too can be seen fulfilled after the coming of Christ, since his teaching ran its course in a very short time and, within not many years, took hold of the whole earth, to the very ends of the inhabited world.

Ps. 148. 16. The words said here are, “Let them praise the name of the Lord, for he spoke and they came into being; he commanded and they were created.” In the testimonies about the God the Word who was in the beginning with God, we have already collected the evidence. We learned there that the Word of God is also called his “name,” according to one of the titles by which we think of him. Here, then, after the opening call, “Praise the Lord,” and after listing this and that, the Spirit goes on to command that praise be given after the Father to his name. The Spirit adds that “he spoke and they came into being; he commanded and they were created.” The one who gives the order and the command would be the God and Father of the whole universe. The one who serves is the Word of God, who carries out the Father’s will for the making of created things. It should also be noted that in Psalm 32 these very words are found: “he spoke and they came into being; he commanded and they were created.” There, however, it is said about the earth and those who inhabit the world. Here it is said about those in the heavens and in the so-called highest places: angels and powers, and also the sun, the moon, the stars, and everything else listed with them. In this the divine Scripture teaches us that, as the holy apostle says, everything was created through the Word, both what is in the heavens and what is on the earth, whether visible or invisible, whether thrones or lordships or rulers or authorities. All things have been created through him and in him, and without him not one thing came into being. That is all that comes from the Psalms. Since this part of the discussion has had a sufficient and moderate length, we will make a fresh start and make our selections from the remaining books in verse, and then from the prophets.

Chapter 3

The following are contained in the third volume of the Prophetic Extracts concerning Christ. First chapter: from Proverbs. Concerning the Word of God, as concerning a Wisdom that exists as a real being, created by God before the ages, who is distinct from him and who together with him takes care of the whole universe. Concerning Christ as the king's son, and concerning his apostles. Concerning Christ as a man, and his ascent into the heavens, and his mastery over the nations.

From Ecclesiastes. Concerning Christ as a poor wise man, and concerning the devil and the Antichrist. Concerning Christ as a poor wise man, and concerning the devil, and concerning the church.

From the Song of Songs. Concerning Christ as the bridegroom, and the church of the saints as the bride, and concerning the mysteries hidden in these passages.

From Job. Concerning Christ as one who walked on the sea and mastered the great sea monster. Concerning Christ's descent into Hades. Concerning the devil's struggle against Christ.

From Hosea. Concerning Christ as an all-devouring beast [πανθ ρος]. Concerning the rejection of Israel, the ending of their kingdom, and the calling of Christ out of Egypt. How God the Word, who is named God, confesses the Father as Lord.

From Amos. How God the Word, who is named Lord, teaches that the Father is someone other than himself. Concerning Christ's coming to live among human beings.

From Obadiah. How God the Word, who is named Lord and God, acknowledges that he has heard something from the Lord.

From Jonah. How the story of Jonah signifies the suffering of Christ and his resurrection from the dead.

From Micah. Concerning Christ's second coming, as concerning the Lord. Concerning the desolation of the former people, of Israel, and of Mount Zion, and concerning the appearing of Christ as a mountain, and the bringing in of the nations, and the new law belonging

to the new covenant. Concerning Bethlehem and the birth of Christ in it, and how Christ existed before the ages.

From Zephaniah. Concerning the resurrection of Christ, and concerning the calling of the nations.

From Zechariah. That God the Word, who is called Lord Almighty, is said to have been sent by the Lord Almighty, the Father. That God the Word, called Lord, foretells that he will come to Jerusalem, and that the nations will flee to him for refuge, since he has been sent by the Lord Almighty. About Christ as Jesus the son of Josedek, and that "Man" is his name, and "Dawn" [or "East"], and about the building of the church. About Christ as a king who will come on a beast of burden and a colt, and who will destroy the cavalry and heavy infantry of the Jews that once lived in Jerusalem, and about peace for the nations. That God the Word, called Lord, speaks of the Lord, the Father. About the thirty pieces of silver for which Judas betrayed Christ to the rulers of the Jews, whom the text here calls Canaanites, and about their rejection. About the suffering of Christ, and the apostles' stumbling over him. About the second coming of Christ.

From the Angel [Malachi]. About the rejection of the Jews, the abolition of their sacrifices, and the churches of Christ throughout the whole world. About the new covenant, and the law of truth of Christ, who is the angel of the Lord Almighty. About the second coming of Christ, as the angel of the covenant of God. About Christ as the sun of righteousness.

From Jeremiah. About the suffering of Christ, as of a lamb. About the suffering of Christ, the destruction of the Jews, and the desolation of Jerusalem. About the calling of the nations, the ungodliness of the Jews, and, by name, the traitor Judas. About Christ as a king from the seed of David, and the priestly service of the church, which is established for ever. About the new covenant, different from the old one given through Moses, and about the laws that belong to the gospel.

From the Lamentations. About the suffering of Christ and the calling of the nations.

From Baruch. About Christ as God who comes down from heaven and lives among human beings.

From Ezekiel. About Christ as the shepherd David who will be raised up, and about the new covenant. About Christ as the David who will be raised up as shepherd, and about the new covenant.

From Daniel. About Christ as a stone, and his everlasting kingdom. About Christ as Son of God. About the coming of Christ as Son of Man, and his everlasting kingdom. About the seventy weeks, and how they are completed at the time of Christ, after which the complete destruction of the Jewish people is prophesied.

Introduction. After the extracts from the Psalms, let us now gather those from the remaining verse books and from the prophecies that follow. This is the third book of the Prophetic

Extracts about Christ, which is the eighth book of the General Elementary Introduction. First I want to point out two things. The words of the prophets cannot be shown to be true unless faith in our Savior and Lord Jesus Christ is taken together with them. And our faith in Christ cannot be made firmer by reason unless we have the proofs about him that were given by the prophets from the beginning. So one may fairly blame two groups for ending up in confusion: the Jews who have not accepted Christ, and the heretics who reject the prophecies. The first group accepts the prophecies as from God, yet proves them false and leaves them unfulfilled, because they cannot accept the outcomes of the prophecies that were fulfilled in Christ. The second group confesses Christ, yet holds a faith in him that has no foundation and no proof, because they do not make use of God's wonderful prophets, who testified about him beforehand. As for us, we confirm the prophecies by the coming of Christ, and we confirm his coming by the prophecies. In this way we present the clear and firm truth with proofs that cannot be refuted. This much by way of introduction; let us now go on to our subject.

The whole book of Proverbs seems to be spoken in the person of Wisdom. At one moment she lays down a moral way of life, and at another she puts words into the mouths of others. Sometimes she sets out riddles, and sometimes she teaches about herself and instructs us about her own divine dignity. We will select the passages that teach us Wisdom is a divine living being, virtuous in her whole nature. She is the same as the one who, after the first God, is the second cause of the universe, the God Word who was with God in the beginning. She is also the providence of God, which governs and manages all things and reaches even to affairs on earth. She was created before every being and substance, as the beginning of the ways of the whole creation. The words are spoken as if by Wisdom herself, in this way: "I, Wisdom, pitched my tent with counsel and knowledge, and I called upon thought. The fear of the Lord hates evil, insolence, arrogance and the ways of the wicked. I hated the twisted ways of evil men. Counsel and security are mine. I am understanding, and strength is mine. Through me kings reign, and rulers write down righteousness. Through me great men are made great. I love those who love me, and those who seek me will find grace. Wealth and glory are mine, and the possession of many things, and righteousness. It is better to gather my fruit than gold and much precious stone, and my produce is better than choice silver. I walk in the ways of righteousness, and move about in the midst of the paths of justice, so that I may give a possession to those who love me and fill their treasuries with good things. If I proclaim to you the things that happen daily, I will remember to count the things from eternity. The Lord created me as the beginning of his ways, for his works. Before the age he founded me, in the beginning, before he made the earth, before he made the depths, before the springs of water came forth,

before the mountains were set firm, and before all the hills, he begets me. The Lord made the lands, even the uninhabited ones, and the highest inhabited parts of what lies under heaven. When he prepared the heaven, I was present with him, when he marked out his own throne upon the winds. When he made the clouds above strong, and set the springs of what is under heaven as secure, when he set for the sea its exact limit, and the waters

will not pass beyond his word [literally 'his mouth'], when he made the foundations of the earth strong, I was beside him, fitting things together. I was the one in whom he delighted every day, and I rejoiced in his presence at all times, when he rejoiced after completing the inhabited world, and rejoiced in the sons of men." This is what Wisdom teaches about herself. Who she is, the holy apostle teaches when he says, "Christ, the power of God and the wisdom of God," and again, "who became wisdom for us from God." So it is Christ who says the things quoted above. He is the Wisdom and Word of God, through whom all things came to be. For "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. All things came to be through him." And, according to the apostle, "In him all things were created, those in the heavens and those on the earth, whether visible or invisible." Under one way of thinking about him he is called Word of God, under another Life, and again Truth and true Light, and whatever else the divine Scriptures call him. In the same way he is also named Wisdom, since he is the servant of the Father for the providence and management of all things.

From Proverbs, part 2. "In the light of the king's son is life, and those who are acceptable to him are like a late cloud." Of what other king's son is life in the light, if not the Word of God, who is the Son of God, the King of all? For he himself is the true light, which enlightens every person coming into the world. In this light is life, according to the word of the Gospel that says, "In him was life, and the life was the light of men." His "acceptable ones" are, as we take it, his apostles and disciples. They became "like a late cloud" at the very end of the days, at the completion of the age. They watered the once desolate and waterless land, that is, the church of the nations, with the spiritual rain of his godly teaching.

From Proverbs, part 3. "This is what the man says to those who trust in God, and I cease. For I am the most foolish of all men, and the understanding of men is not in me. But God taught me wisdom, and I have known the knowledge of holy ones. Who has gone up into heaven and come down? Who has gathered the winds in his bosom? Who has wrapped up water in a garment? Who has held the ends of the earth? What is his name, or what is the name of his children?" Who else could this man be who says these things, other than our Lord who became man? He speaks either because of our follies, which he took upon himself, or because of the foolishness of the preaching, which is wiser and stronger than the wisdom of men. Here he says, "I am the most foolish of all men." In the sixty-eighth psalm he says, "You knew my folly." He also says, "the understanding of men is not in me," as if boasting of a great achievement in having none of the understanding of those who have been compared to senseless animals and have become like them. Or he means those whose wisdom God made foolish, who think about nothing more than earthly things, such as belong to flesh and matter. For this reason they are attested to be "shrewd in their generation": they seek and think only of earthly things, [from youth] and still on evil things. In the man spoken of there was no human understanding at all, but clearly there was a divine understanding, beyond the human. This is why he goes on to say, "But God taught me wisdom, and I have known the knowledge of holy ones." Then he asks, "Who has gone up into heaven and come down?" It is as though he is stirring us to search out the one who teaches such great things

about himself. The words that follow also concern him, and they need a study of their own. The divine apostle, teaching us about him, says: he who went down into the lower parts of the earth is himself also the one who went up far above the heavens.

In saying "4:10" he puts "came down" first and then adds "went up"; then he says again "came down." After the resurrection from the dead he said to Mary, "Do not touch me, for I have not yet gone up to my Father." After this he was seen by the disciples over forty days, living with them. Evidently he had gone up to the Father, and he came down again for the sake of the plan of salvation he was carrying out. This is why it is said: "Going up on high he led captivity captive, and gave gifts among men." And what are these gifts but the gifts of the Holy Spirit, which he brought down from heaven? That is why the text here, in Aquila's version, reads: "Who went up into heaven and brought down?" He is also the one who has taken hold of the ends of the earth, so that his word has gone out into all the earth, and his words to the ends of the world. Whoever has been given a word of knowledge will know how to understand the rest of what is said at this place. The text urges us to ask what his name is, and what the name of his children is. To this we will respond on the basis of what we have received from the facts. His name is Jesus, which is translated "salvation of God." His relatives according to the flesh gave him this name, following the message of Gabriel, and the angel also gave the reason for the name: "For he will save his people from their sins." And the name of his children? He said to them, "Little children, I am with you a little while longer." And then those after them in all the churches, his sons and grandsons and descendants: what else could their name be but the blessed name "Christian"?

From Ecclesiastes, 4. "A poor child who is good and wise is better than an old and foolish king, who no longer knew how to take heed. For he will come out of the house of prisoners to reign, though he was born poor even in his own kingdom. I saw all the living who walk under the sun, with the second young man who will rise up in his place. There is no end to all the people, to all who were before them; and those who come after will not rejoice in him. For this too is vanity and a striving after wind." Christ is the wisdom of God, and for our sake, though he was rich, he became poor. So I think the words "a poor child who is good and wise is better than an old and foolish king" are said about him. The old king I take to be the devil, grown old in evil days. He is king over those who are ruled by the sin that he works in them. He is foolish, because he has been stripped of the wisdom that is virtuous and according to God. The good and wise child just mentioned came out of the house of prisoners, that is, the place around the earth, or the regions in Hades. At the resurrection from the dead he came forth, was set up as king by the Father on Zion, God's heavenly mountain, and in that very kingdom of his he became poor. He did not consider equality with God something to be grasped, but humbled himself and came down from the highest glory for the sake of those who could not take in the riches of his wisdom. The "second young man" who is said to rise up in his place, I take to be the antichrist. The text says that all the living who walk under the sun were seen with him. And who could these be but all those who cherish what is called "vanity of vanities" under the sun?

From Ecclesiastes, chapter 5: "This too I saw, wisdom under the sun, and it seemed great to me. There was a small city with few men in it. A great king came against it, surrounded it, and built great siege-works against it. In it he found a poor and wise man, and that man saved the city by his wisdom. Yet no one remembered that poor man. And I said, 'Wisdom is better than might.' But the poor man's wisdom is despised, and his words are not heard." Here too the one who wages the war is called a king, and the one who rescues the besieged city is a poor and wise man. In the preceding chapter it was said, "A poor and wise child is better than an old and foolish king." There we took the foolish king to be the devil, and the poor and wise one to be the Word of God, who emptied himself and became poor for our sake. That is why we marked the earlier passage. We think the warring king described here is the same as the foolish king mentioned there. In the same way, the one here who saves the besieged city by his own wisdom is the poor and wise man there, whom we said is Christ. He ransomed the small city. By that I mean the region of the earth, which is very small compared with the whole universe. He also ransomed those in it, who are few compared with the whole multitude of rational beings, for all the nations are "like a drop from a bucket." They were under siege from the kingdom of the devil. He surrounded the region of the earth and those in it on every side, and he built great siege-works against it: the rulers, the authorities, the world-rulers of this darkness, and the spiritual forces of wickedness.

No one but the poor and wise man alone brought this enemy down: our Savior and Lord. He emptied himself and became poor for our sake, though rich in his own mercy. Having brought the enemy down, he saved the small city by his wisdom. This city is, as is likely, the church, taken in another sense, and those in it are few, because the way that leads to life is narrow and hard, and few are those who go through it. Those who see so great a plan of salvation say, "Wisdom is better than might." By "might" he plainly means the might of the enemies. The text also says, "No one remembered that poor man." It was God who remembered him through the prophets and proclaimed beforehand his coming among men. But not one of those worked on by the wisdom of the rulers of this age ever remembered him, since they were not able to know the mystery hidden before the ages, the plan of the Word of God to become man. Beyond this it says, "The poor man's wisdom is despised." Indeed, God was pleased through the foolishness of the preaching to save those who believe. It also says, "his words are not heard." For not everyone can hear the words of the Savior, but only those who have ears to hear. The gospel of Christ is veiled, though not to his disciples: it is veiled to those who are perishing.

Of the Song of Songs, 6. The whole book has as its subject a bride's love for the bridegroom. She confesses that she is wounded by her love for him. He in turn confesses that she alone, out of many, is his perfect dove, set apart from those called queens, concubines and maidens. Now those of the circumcision are convinced that this writing is one of the twenty-two books they hold to be inspired by God. Yet I do not know whether they could show anything in what it says that is worthy of divine inspiration, since they imagine nothing more in these passages than the obvious reading. But the one who is able can take away the veil that lies

over this writing too. He can turn to the Lord, who is the Spirit, and with unveiled face see reflected, even in these words, the glory of the Lord. Such a person will see in it the mysteries of the spiritual bride, who is clearly the church of Christ. He will see what is said about the bridegroom of this perfect bride, and about the difference between her and his queens, concubines and maidens. He will see also all the other, more hidden lessons stored up in the book. These have already received the fullest explanation in the commentaries written by that most diligent interpreter of the divine Scriptures.

From Job, 7. It is Job who says of the Lord, along with other things: "He who speaks to the sun, and it does not rise, and seals up the stars; who alone stretched out the heaven, and who walks on the sea as on solid ground." And again: "He who is about to subdue the great sea monster." Now it does not fit a lofty idea of the God of the universe to suppose that he, who fills all things, walks upon the sea as though it could contain so great a size [of his]. So what remains is to understand these words of the Word. By his power Joshua son of Nun, who was a type of him, spoke to the sun and it stood still at Gibeon. And at the time of his passion, as though at some divine command, the sun darkened the whole earth. He is also the one who stretched out the heaven, and who walked on the sea as on solid ground when, having become man, he performed his marvelous works, as the Gospels record. If the passages are to be referred wholly to the Word of God, then it follows that we should take to be about him not only the words I have set out, but everything said by Job in this section. For he alone subdued the great sea monster. He loosed the pains of death and brought to nothing the devil, the truly great dragon. In former times the devil, in his strength, swallowed up human souls, like the sea monster that swallowed Jonah. But later he was subdued by the one who wrestled him down, and he brought out again those whom he had swallowed long before, just as the beast gave Jonah back safe. In this a prophecy is fulfilled which says, "Death swallowed them up in its strength, and again God wiped away every tear from every face." We say this because of our Savior and Lord, who subdued what is here called the great sea monster.

From the Psalms and Job, section 8. In his words to Job, the Lord goes through the works of his own providence and plan, and says: "Did you take clay from the earth and form a living creature, and give it speech on the earth? Did you take the light from the ungodly, and break the arms of the proud? Did you go to the source of the sea, and walk in the tracks of the abyss? Are the gates of death opened to you in fear, and did the gatekeepers of Hades crouch down when they saw you?" The Lord says these things to Job about himself, as though no one but he alone could do such great works. For who is it that took earth and formed a living creature, if not God, who took dust from the ground and formed man? At the same time we learn from this that the one who formed man is also the one who went down to the lower parts of the earth, to what is called its heart, which I take to be what is here named "the source of the sea." He is also the one who walked in the tracks of the sea. To him alone the gates of death were opened in fear, because it was not possible for death to hold him. Even the gatekeepers of Hades crouched down when they saw him, for they saw the victory and the sting, and the pangs of death being destroyed through him. Perhaps it

was to these gatekeepers of the "gates of death" mentioned here that certain divine powers said, at the time of the passion and our Savior's descent into Hades: "Lift up your gates, you rulers, and be lifted up, you eternal gates, and the king of glory will come in." The gates are called "eternal," I suppose, because from all ages they had been opened to no one else but him alone, who rescued and gave life to those who long before had been swallowed up by death.

Of him it is said here, "The gates of death are opened to you in fear, and the gatekeepers of Hades crouched down when they saw you." And in Psalm 106 it says, "For he broke the bronze gates." These were no other gates, I think, than the gates of death. "And he broke the iron bars" – clearly the bars of those same gates. So we have taken these words as applying to Christ and to no one else. For he is the one to whom the Father has given all judgment, so that he takes the light away from the ungodly and breaks the arms of the proud. But if someone thinks these things are said about the God of the universe, let him consider whether it is godly to say this of the God who contains all things. For he says, "Do I not fill heaven and earth, says the Lord," the God whose throne is heaven and whose footstool is the earth. Is it godly even to imagine that this God walked in the tracks of the sea? And what is so wonderful, or so worthy of the uncreated nature, in boasting as if it were something great that the gates of death were opened to him? Would it suit the God of the universe to describe as something great and amazing about himself that the gatekeepers of the people crouched down when they saw him? I do not think these things are said about him. They can, however, be applied in a godly way and without strain to the Word of God, our Savior and Lord Jesus Christ, who became man and endured death, and rose from the dead with divine power and the authority given to him by the Father.

From Job, section 9. Again, in his words to Job, the Lord speaks about the dragon and says, "Are you not afraid, since it has been prepared for me?" He says this of the dragon, who is none other than the devil. Consider, then, whether it is fitting to suppose that the God of the universe says this. It suits our Lord and Savior better, for it is for him alone that the devil has been prepared: the devil who was conquered by no one else and had prevailed over nearly everyone. The Word of God alone, stronger than all, subdued him, as in the words, "the one who is about to subdue the great sea monster." And having subdued him, he urges his disciples to take courage, saying, "Take courage, I have conquered the world." So much for these passages, and for those from the poetic books after the Psalms. What remains is to gather the passages from the prophetic writings, beginning with those from the Twelve.

From Hosea. "Because I am like a panther to Ephraim, and like a lion to the house of Judah." In another place the Lord says of himself through the same prophet, "And I will be like a panther." So we must look at what is recorded about this animal, and the following should be set out from the first book of Didymus's Physica. The panther is not only beautiful in body, spotted like stars, but its breath is naturally sweet, so that it surpasses even the spices of India in fragrance. Until it is hungry it stays in its den, content to be a kind of homebody. When it wants to take food, it comes out and walks alone. The other beasts are

captured by the fragrance about its body and follow it, charmed. But the panther, with a sidelong glance, looks around for the beast that suits it, leaps on it and holds it fast. That is what is said about the nature of the animal. How these things might be applied to the power of the divine Word, and to the fragrance that breathes out from it, would take too long to explain now. This passage should be set before those of the circumcision who, with a kind of slander and abuse, say that our Savior and Lord Jesus Christ was born of a Panther. Perhaps they received this by some tradition that points to something more mystical, yet they do not grasp its meaning, because they do not pay attention to the prophecy's present wording, in which the Lord himself names himself a panther.

From the same. "And destruction will rise up among your people, and all the fortified walls of your temple will be gone. As the ruler Salamon [did] from the house of Jeroboam, in the days of war they dashed a mother to the ground along with her children. So the house of Israel will do to you, because of your evils." And: "Because Israel is a child, and I loved him, and out of Egypt I called back his children. As I called them back, so they went away from my face." Instead of "and out of Egypt I called back his children," Aquila, following the Hebrew, gave "Out of Egypt I called back my son." I noted the wording because it was necessary: Matthew sets out the prophecy word for word, saying that it was fulfilled very exactly in our Savior: "Joseph, having been warned, took Mary and her son; and he returned from Egypt into the land of Israel." Now consider whether this also fits Aquila's rendering, which says: "At dawn the king of Israel was silenced, because Israel is a child and I loved him; and from Egypt I called my son." For this clearly shows the rejection of the kingdom of Israel. That kingdom stood until our Savior's appearing, and then it was cast out and silenced. This is why it says, "At dawn the king of Israel was silenced," the prophecy calling "dawn" the appearing, the first rising of the divine Word on all people at that time. "The king of Israel was silenced" can also be a prophecy about Herod. He was silenced because of the trick the magi played on him at the birth of our Savior. This happened because of the Father's love for his own child, our Lord Jesus Christ, who is called Israel here, as he is in other prophecies. At the proper time God arranged for him to go away to Egypt with Joseph and his mother, when need called for the king who was plotting against him, clearly Herod, to be silenced.

Then, after Herod's death, the Father calls him back again, in keeping with the prophecy before us. Someone might apply these words to the Jewish people and say they were spoken about the circumcised people of Israel. Let him pay attention to the flow of the passage. The prophet has said beforehand, as if to Jerusalem herself, "And destruction will rise up among your people, and all your walled places will be gone." The Lord adds that this prince suffered what he did in the war that came upon him, a war in which they dashed a mother to the ground with her children. He says: I will do very much the same to you yourselves because of your wickedness, O house of Israel. You were cast away together with your king, and you have suffered all these things. Why? "Because Israel is a child, and I loved him, and out of Egypt I called my son." Let anyone who wishes show what sequence of thought the passage has on that reading. But just as in countless other prophecies Christ is called

Jacob and Israel, so he is here. The Father says, in effect: since this one became obedient to me, took the form of a servant, and became a child beloved by me, having carried out all my purpose, therefore I called him back, as my true and beloved son, from the spiritual Egypt into which he went down when he became man. But you, to whom this word is addressed, I will hand over, together with your kingdom, to ruin and destruction. That is what the prophecy says. It is plain how, from the time of our Savior, when Jerusalem was besieged, the kingdom of the Jews that had stood until then was torn down and utterly cast away. So this prophecy too, along with the others, has been fulfilled.

From the same Hosea, 12. "I will not leave Ephraim to be wiped out, for I am God and not man, holy in your midst, and I will not enter into a city. I will go after the Lord." The same speaker who said, "For I am God," goes on to say, "I will go after the Lord." Who else could be God and yet go after the Lord, if not the Word of God, following the will of the Father? He also teaches us not to suppose that, because he became man, he was a mere man like one of the righteous and holy men of old. He says he will not enter into a city, showing that he did not live an ordinary, merely human civic life. He trains his disciples to do the same when he says, "Do not go off on the road of the Gentiles, and do not enter a city of the Samaritans."

From Joel, nothing clear. From Amos, 13. "I overthrew you, as God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah, and you became like a brand snatched out of the fire, and even so you did not turn back to me, says the Lord." Here too the Lord himself speaks as though of another: "as God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah." In Genesis, too, the divine Scripture keeps the two persons distinct when it says, "And the Lord rained on Sodom and Gomorrah sulfur and fire from the Lord." From these words the right belief of the church about the Father and the Son is made plain.

From the same, 14. "Get ready to call on your God, Israel. For behold, he who makes the thunder firm, and creates the wind, and announces his christ to men, who makes the dawn and the mist, and treads on the high places of the earth: the Lord God Almighty is his name." Through these words, too, the coming of Christ among men is clearly prophesied. With leisure, each phrase could be explained more precisely.

From Obadiah, 15. "The vision of Obadiah. Thus says the Lord God to Edom: I have heard a report from the Lord, and he has sent out a message of encirclement to the nations." Since here again the Lord God has heard a report from the Lord, we have reasonably marked this passage.

From Jonah, 16. We have found no prophecy in this book that is specifically about Christ in particular. But when the generation asked the Savior for a sign, he said that no other sign would be given to it than the sign of Jonah the prophet. He added: "For just as Jonah was in the belly of the sea monster three days and three nights, so the Son of Man will be in the heart of the earth three days and three nights." For this reason we have had to mark this writing too among the testimonies about Christ.

Because, look, the Lord, the Lord, is coming out from his place. He will come down and tread on the heights of the earth. The mountains will be shaken beneath him, and the valleys will melt like wax before the face of fire. We understand these words to refer to the second coming of Christ.

From the same prophet. "Hear this, you leaders of the house of Jacob, and you who are left of the house of Israel, you who loathe justice and twist everything that is straight, you who build Zion with blood and Jerusalem with wrongdoing. Her leaders judged for gifts, her priests gave rulings for pay, and her prophets prophesied for silver. Yet they leaned on the Lord and said, 'Is the Lord not among us? No evil will come upon us.' Therefore, because of you, Zion will be plowed like a field, Jerusalem will become like a fruit-watcher's hut, and the mountain of the house will become a thicket of woodland. But in the last of the days the mountain of the Lord will be plainly seen, established on the tops of the mountains, and it will be lifted high above the hills. Peoples will come to it, and many nations will travel to it and say, 'Come, let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob. They will show us his way, and we will walk in his paths.' For from Zion a law will go out, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem. He will judge between many peoples and will rebuke a strong people far away. They will beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks. Nation will no longer lift sword against nation, and they will no longer learn to make war." The passage first says that, because of the ungodliness of the Jewish people, Mount Zion will be plowed like a field, and Jerusalem, once thought of as the holy city, will become like a fruit-watcher's hut. It then goes on to prophesy about another mountain of the Lord. This mountain already existed at the time of the prophecy, but it was not plain to ordinary people. It would appear only in the last of the days and be lifted high above the hills and mountains. The passage foretells that peoples and many nations will come to this new mountain, no longer that old Israel, and will say, "Come, let us go up to the mountain of the Lord."

They will go up not only to the mountain of the Lord but also to the house of the God of Jacob. This house is clearly different from the one in Jerusalem, since he had said a little earlier that Jerusalem would be made desolate and become like a fruit-watcher's hut. In keeping with this, Mount Zion and Jerusalem are to be laid waste, and other things are to appear in their place. So it is said that another law, different from the one Moses gave from Mount Horeb, will go out from the new mountain, which is also called Zion, with the same name as the former one. Moreover, a word of the Lord is said to go forth along with the new law from the new Jerusalem, which he earlier called the house of the God of Jacob. This word, going out to all the nations, is foretold to judge between many peoples and to rebuke a strong people. It is also foretold that it will so benefit those it rebukes, by its judgment and rebuke, that they will turn from their former holy but warlike condition to the calm and peaceful [manner of life . . .]. [The text is damaged here.] This is what the prophecy says. But one may consider whether [. . .] the coming of our Savior, because of those who built [. . .] with the blood of the prophets, and of Christ himself, and of his [apostles]. These were killed in Jerusalem itself by the [people] of the Jews [. . .] because of those who [. . .]

the rest, all that [was said] in the prophecy [. . .] Mount Zion as never at any other time [. . .] Jerusalem was besieged. After their desolation [. . .] and the heavenly Mount Zion of God. Of these the [earthly ones] were a shadow, types and patterns, and this has been made plain to all who have come [. . .] to God through Christ.

19. "And you, Bethlehem, house of Ephrathah, you are too small to be [among the thousands] of Judah. From you shall come out for me a leader, to be a ruler in Israel. And his goings out are from the beginning, from the days of eternity." (Mic. 5:2) [...] Through these words, proofs about Christ are set out. One is against the error of Marcion and the other heretics [...]. The other is against Artemon and the Samosatene [...], and against as many of the Ebionites as have supposed that he did not exist before the incarnation [...]. Those who do not confess him [to be] God are plainly refuted by the prophetic word, [which says] that his goings out are from the beginning and from days of [eternity] [...]. But to those who follow Marcion and the other [heresies], who are in error and do not confess [...] his birth, nor that he was known by the [servants] of the Creator, one must set beside [their error] the place of birth that was prophesied [...] light to this day, even from the natives of the place [...]. It is as if by tradition, the place in Bethlehem where [...] he was born. [It is] also [attested] by the holy evangelists themselves [...]. The saying must also be put to the Jews [...], to show whoever he might be [...] the one prophesied as incomplete [...] according to them. And it is clear that the divine [...] prediction is also shown to be false [on their view]. But the saving gospel word of Christ was set up as ruler of the Israel of the mind, properly of the Jew who is one in secret, and of every virtuous and perceptive soul, [understood] as Israel [...].

Nothing clear from Nahum. And from Habakkuk [nothing is given]. From Zephaniah: 20. "Therefore wait for me, says the Lord, for the day of my rising up as a witness. For my judgment is for gatherings of nations, so as to receive kings." (Zeph. 3:8) I think these words also point to the resurrection of Christ from the dead. It is prophesied that when it had happened, gatherings of the church from the nations would be set up everywhere. Perhaps [...] also [refers to] his second coming and the universal [...] of all [...]; [the matters of the passage may be so understood].

Nothing clear from Haggai. From Zechariah: 21. [...] Almighty: "After glory he has sent me to the [nations that plundered] you." (Zech. 2:8) Then, a little later, he adds: "You will know that the Lord Almighty has sent me." The one who says [...] me is the Lord Almighty. In the same way the one who [sends], [...] being [...] of the one who is sent, is named Lord Almighty. So it is reasonable for us, in the matters concerning the Father and the Son, [to take] the saying [to mean] that the Lord Almighty is also [the Son] of God, just as he was also called God through the prophets.

From the same. 22. "[Rejoice] and be glad, daughter of Zion, for look, I am coming, and [I will] dwell in your midst, says the Lord. And [many nations] will flee for refuge to the Lord in that day, and they will be [his] people, and they will make their dwelling in your midst, and you will know that [the Lord] Almighty has sent me to you." (Zech. 2:10) And who is

this who says these things and confesses that he has been sent by the Almighty, if not the Word of God, sent by the Father for the salvation of the human race? He [...] the things set before us [...] the heavenly Zion, of which the mountain on earth was an example [...]. And it is also directed to the church from the nations, [announcing] to her the calling of those who will be saved through him [...], who will be ruled as kings by him in her.

From the same book. 23. And [...] Jesus the great priest, standing before the face of the Lord, and the devil was standing at his right hand to oppose him. And a little later: And he spoke to those standing before [...] of him, saying, "Take the filthy garments off him." And he said, "See, I have taken away your lawless deeds. Clothe [him in a robe reaching to the feet], and put a clean turban on his head." Again, a little later, it is said to him: "Listen now, Jesus the great priest, you and your neighbors who sit before you, for they are men who watch for portents. For see, I am bringing my servant, the Rising." And again, after other things: And the word of the Lord came to me, saying, "Take what comes from the captivity, from the rulers." And a little after: "You shall take silver and make crowns, and put them on the head of Jesus son of Josedek, the great priest. And you shall say to him, 'Thus says the Lord Almighty: See, a man whose name is Rising. From beneath him he will rise up, and he will build the house of the Lord. He himself will receive excellence, and will sit and rule on his throne. The priest will be at his right hand, and a counsel of peace will be between them both.' And the crown will be for those who endure." The wonderful apostle called our Savior and Lord Jesus Christ a great high priest who has passed through the heavens. So the man in the prophecy, honored with the same title and the same dignity, may reasonably be referred to him. [...] So the Lord showed this man to the prophet [...] clothed in filthy garments. By this he hints at the coming down of our Savior into the captivity we were in. In that coming [...] to proclaim release to the captives. For he took our sins upon himself, and so he wore the filthy clothing that came from us.

The Father commands him to take these off and to put on the divine garments, worthy of the heavenly high priesthood. These things probably happened in the history, in a typical way, to the Jesus of that time. But the word then makes a fresh beginning, addressed to the man Jesus himself and to those with him, the "portent-watchers." I think those who were counted worthy of the spiritual [...] are called by this name. He says, "See, I am bringing the [...] Rising." Then he comes down to the placing of the crowns on the head of Jesus himself, and adds: "Thus says the Lord Almighty: See, a man whose name is Rising. From beneath him [he will] rise up, and he will build the house of the Lord, and [...]." These things too are to be referred to Christ, [...] receiving the account that fits them. [...] Even for those of the circumcision [...] to set beside it. For they could not show any prophet at all raised up from [the time of the] Persian kingdom, or in the times of the prophecy [...], let alone John and our Lord Jesus Christ. Who then is the one prophesied? It is time to say [...]. But if they say that these words refer to Jesus the son of Josedek, we must show them that what is said does not fit him at all. For when was his name called Rising? Why is he thought worthy of that title? How will "he will sit and rule on his throne" fit him? Above all, how will "the

priest will be at his right hand" fit him? For if he himself was the great priest, who would the one at his right hand be, being another priest besides him?

But he clearly teaches that the one called Branch ("Rising") is someone other than that man. The word speaks to the same [Lord] and to those around him: "Hear now, Jesus the great priest, you and those near you: behold, I am bringing my servant, Branch." If this was said to him, how can anyone still suppose that the words "behold, a man, Branch is his name" are said about him? These words plainly present two persons. One is the person to whom God speaks. The other is the person about whom he prophesies. That other person can without dispute be referred to Christ, who is truly the Son of the [...] [...], which is interpreted "Iao, righteousness." This would be the Father [...], placing the crowns of victory on Christ [...] calls [him so], because of the teaching that has risen on human beings [...]. He is also the first and great high priest [...], his firstborn Word, who is God and Lord of the [...], and priest of the first and unbegotten Godhead. [...] He says that he is [...] of the man whom he took up, who is called a great priest [...] because of his union with the only-begotten of God. The passage needs much more explanation, but this is enough for the present purpose.

"Rejoice greatly, [...] daughter of Zion; proclaim, daughter of Jerusalem. Behold, the [king] comes to you, righteous and saving, himself meek and [riding] on [...] a beast of burden and a young colt. And he will destroy chariots from Ephraim and the horse from Jerusalem, and the bow of war will be destroyed, and multitude and peace from the nations, and he will rule from sea and from rivers through the outlets of the earth." The daughter of Zion, whom the word commands to rejoice, is every soul that attains to the spiritual and heavenly Zion. Or she is the church on earth, gathered from the nations through Christ. In the same way the daughter of Jerusalem is the one who bears kinship to the heavenly Jerusalem. Such was the one Paul spoke of when he said, "But the Jerusalem above is free, which is our mother." So the word announces beforehand to such souls that the Christ of God will visit them, riding on a beast of burden and a young colt. This is how the human nature is to be understood, which he took up when he came to visit us. With that nature he destroyed every warlike power from every soul that belongs to the church and is able to bear holy fruit. "Ephraim" is taken to mean fruitfulness, and "Jerusalem," in the Greek tongue, means vision of peace. He also destroyed the evil demons who had earlier held sway over humanity. From all the nations that were once subject to them he brought countless numbers under the godly yoke of his teaching. That is the meaning in the spirit. But the Christ also became man and fulfilled the prophecies about him in the body, and in the literal sense he put the finishing touch on this one too. According to the evangelist, he said to his disciples, "Go into the village opposite, and you will find a donkey and a colt, tied up. Untie it and bring it. And if anyone says anything to you, say, 'The Lord has need of [them].' "

"And they went and did just as he had commanded them." (Matt. 21:2) This being so, we must set these words beside the view of those who imagine, in a purely bodily and Jewish way, that what is set before us would come to pass at Christ's coming. And we must show how, at the coming of our Savior, even in a bodily sense, the prophecy that says, "and he will

destroy the chariots from Ephraim and the horse from Jerusalem," was fulfilled along with the others. The divine and heavenly power of Christ, by an inexpressible working, after [the Jews'] plot against him, destroyed Jerusalem itself together with [the surrounding places], in which the warlike force was found. [The text is broken here.] Then the people in it, often named Ephraim, [text lost] the commandment, multiplying horses in Jerusalem and chariots [text lost], for the battle lines in wars [text lost], the horses that had come to be, likened to senseless beasts [text lost]. The coming of our Savior plainly destroyed all these. [Text lost] after those had been destroyed, through the saving coming, perhaps a multitude out of all the nations received what is in souls [text lost]. God began to rule and to hold sway [text lost] of the angelic word, over the whole inhabited world, according to the prophecy of the divine word.

From the same Zechariah. 25. "And I will strengthen them in the Lord their God, and in his name they will boast, says the Lord." (Zech. 10:12) Again the Lord, the Word of God, promises to strengthen those who are worthy "in the Lord their God," meaning his own God and Father. So let this saying also be marked among the passages about the Father and the Son.

From the same. 26. "And the Canaanites will know the sheep that are kept for me, because it is the word of the Lord. And I will say to them, 'If it is good in your sight, give me my wages, or refuse them.' And they set my wages at thirty pieces of silver. And they threw them into the house of the Lord, into the smelting furnace. And I threw away the second staff [text lost] to break up the covenant between Judah and between Israel." (Zech. 11:11) Indeed, what was there among the events concerning our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ that was not foreknown and foretold by God's holy prophets? [Text lost] For his birth from a virgin, and the manner of his birth [text lost] and the root from which he was born according to the flesh. And the marvels [that happened] when he came, [text lost] through the prophets from of old, [text lost] were counted worthy of record by the divine Spirit. Above all, they also made known beforehand his death and its manner. They did not leave out [text lost] the scourgings he endured, the spitting, the blows and the insults. They also revealed the one of his disciples who would betray him to those plotting against him.

So the divine Spirit pilloried him by name through Jeremiah, saying: "The sin of Judah is written with an iron pen, with a diamond point." You can find these words in the Hebrew itself and in the other translators, as distinct from the Septuagint interpreters. In various Psalms, too, you can learn what is made known about him. Even now, in the passage before us, the divine Scripture declares plainly beforehand the number of the silver pieces which Judas took when he betrayed the Teacher to those plotting against him. The passage could be spoken in the person of Christ. The word of prophecy elsewhere calls those who plotted against him "rulers of Sodom" and "people of Gomorrah." Here it names them Canaanites, because they were like the Canaanites. When the prophecy says, "And the Canaanites will know," it goes on to teach us whom it means, and says: "the sheep that are kept for me." Who were these sheep, kept for the Lord earlier, if not the people of the circumcision? The

word now calls them Canaanites, and goes on as though in the person of Christ, saying what is written: "And I will say to them..." He would say this to those who plotted against him, as though asking from them the wages for the good he had done them. That is, he asks for faith in him and a life that fits that faith. This is how I understand "Give me my wages." But they, in keeping with what he says of them elsewhere: "Instead of loving me, they accused me, but I kept praying;

and they repaid me evil for good, and hatred for my love" — they weighed out thirty pieces of silver and gave them to the betrayer, as though in their own utterly godless judgment that was his worth. But since fire will test what sort of work each person's work is, the Lord commands that they be thrown into the furnace, that is, into the fire of judgment and punishment. And who are they, if not those who plotted against him? "And see," he says, "whether it is approved." He plainly means what was done to him by them. He says they will be tested in the fire, just as the Lord himself was tested for their sake through his coming in the flesh and his suffering. For he became man first of all for this, and he suffered for the salvation of the lost sheep of the house of Israel. Next, the word points to their rejection after the suffering of our Saviour, and says: "And I cast away the second staff." To teach us what this is, it adds the "measuring line," of which it has been said, "the measuring line of his inheritance, Israel." It makes this clearer by adding "to break the first covenant of God, between Judah and between Israel." It is clearly shown that from the time of our Saviour they were stripped of their place, and that all the worship according to the law was abolished from then until now.

From the same Zechariah. 27. "Sword, awake against my shepherd, and against the man who is his fellow citizen, says the Lord Almighty. Strike the shepherd, and let the sheep be scattered; and I will turn my hand against the shepherds." The evangelist took the words "Strike the shepherd, and the sheep of the flock will be scattered" from here, and taught that they were fulfilled at the time of the Saviour's suffering, when the disciples left him and were scattered. For this reason we too have marked this saying. It needs much examination, and we will leave it for a suitable time.

From the same. 28. "And the Lord will go out and draw up battle against those nations, as on a day of war; and the Lord my God will come, and all the holy ones with him." We have marked these words because we suppose they are spoken of the second coming of Christ.

From the Psalms [the prophet], of the same one, the Angel (Malachi). 29. "I have no pleasure in you, says the Lord Almighty, and I will not accept a sacrifice from your hands. For from the rising of the sun to its setting my name has been glorified among the nations, and in every place incense is offered to my name, and a pure sacrifice. For my name is great among the nations, says the Lord Almighty; but you profane it." In the divine Scriptures the Word of the God of the universe is called his hand, his right hand, his arm and his power; in the same way the same Word is also given the title "name" of God. Now this divine name has been glorified among the nations from the rising of the sun to its setting, as is plain to everyone from those who everywhere bear the title of Christ. In every place these people

offer to God spiritual incense, and the pure, bloodless and rational sacrifice made through prayers, through the true High Priest. Since they worship in this way, God says that he will turn away from the bodily sacrifices of the former people. So it is clear that after the coming of Christ the prophecy has been fulfilled in both respects: in the rejection of the former people, when sacrifice and drink offering were taken away from them, as Daniel says, and in the turning of the nations to the God of the universe.

Of the same. 30. "The covenant with him was one of life and peace, and I gave him fear, that he should fear me, and that he should be sent out from the face of my name. The law of truth was in his mouth, and no injustice was found on his lips. He walked with me in peace, setting things straight, and he turned many back from injustice. For the lips of a priest will guard knowledge, and they will seek the law from his mouth, because he is the messenger of the Lord Almighty." We have set these words out because we take them to fit the testimonies about Christ. For the covenant of life and peace was with him. The spirit of fear, together with the others, rested upon him, according to the word spoken in Isaiah: "and the spirit of the fear of God will fill him." The law of truth, not the law of types, was in his mouth, and no injustice was found on his lips. For according to Isaiah, "he committed no sin, nor was deceit found on his lips." Since he was always with the Father's power, he walked with him in peace, setting things straight, and leading to repentance many who had long not known God. From him, as High Priest who guards the knowledge of all things, people have sought the divine law, and will go on seeking it, those for whom knowledge of him is destined. For he himself is the messenger of the great counsel, serving and announcing to every created being the will of the Father.

Of the same. 31. "Behold, I am sending out my messenger, and he will look over the way before my face. And suddenly the Lord whom you seek will come to his own temple, and the messenger of the covenant whom you desire. Behold, he is coming, says the Lord Almighty. And who will endure the day of his entrance? Or who will stand at his appearing? For he is coming in like the fire of a smelter's furnace and like the soap of launderers. And he will sit refining and purifying, like silver and gold." The matters concerning the second coming of Christ are also prophesied through these words, when [the text is damaged here] the Christ of God, sent out by the God and Father of the universe, who is now called the messenger of the covenant, will look over the way before the face of the Father. That is, he will prepare in advance the souls of people for the Father's kingdom. When he has built up the spiritual temple, that is the church, out of rational and living stones, the Lord and God the Word himself will come, together with the messenger of the covenant, into the temple just described. Then, announcing in advance his second coming, the Word says, as if to sinners, "Behold, the Lord Almighty is coming."

"And who will endure the day of his entrance? Or who will stand at his appearing?" and what follows. We must pay careful attention to these words, because the Lord Almighty himself speaks them as about another. And those of the circumcision must be silenced, if they have anyone else to name as the Lord who is meant here, and the angel of the covenant

with him, about whom the Lord Almighty says, "Behold, he is coming," and the rest. In these words, as we understand them, the second coming of Christ is announced. He is the Word of God, and when he arrives he will enter into each person's soul. He will judge each one for what he has done in his life. Like gold, he will purge it and refine it in fire, and cleanse the ruling faculty of every person. The Father has given all judgment to the Son, according to the saying in the Psalms: "O God, give your judgment to the king, and your righteousness to the king's son, to judge your people in righteousness and your poor in judgment." Here the Godhead, God the Word himself, is proclaimed as king, and the man whom he took up is the king's son.

From the same angel (Malachi), 32. "And for you who fear my name the sun of righteousness will rise, and healing will be in its wings." The sun of righteousness is the true light that enlightens every person coming into the world. It is said to rise only for those who fear the name of his Father. For those who are not like this he threatens to set, as it is said in one of the prophets: "And the sun will set upon the prophets who lead my people astray." So much for the passages from the Twelve Prophets. But the passages from Isaiah are so many that we intend to treat them in a separate work. So let us move on and look at the passages from the other major prophets.

From Jeremiah, 33. "Lord, make it known to me, and I will know it; then I saw their practices. But I did not know that I was like a harmless lamb led away to be sacrificed. They plotted against me, saying, 'Come, let us put wood into his bread, and let us wipe him out from the land of the living, so that his name will no longer be remembered.'" Our Savior and Lord Jesus Christ, according to the prophecy in Isaiah, "was led like a sheep to slaughter, and like a lamb silent before its shearer." In the passage before us it is, "like a harmless lamb led away to be sacrificed, I did not know." His suffering on the cross can also be shown by the words, "Come, let us put wood into his bread and wipe him out from the land of the living, and his name will no longer be remembered." These words are spoken in the person of those who plotted against him. His body was bread, as he himself teaches the disciples when he says, "Take, eat; this is my body." And that body was the very thing displayed on the wood at the cross. So it is fitting to say of it, "Come, let us put wood into his bread." If the passage also has a deeper meaning, what has been said here does no harm to that.

Psalm-like extract, from the same prophet, 34. "I have forsaken my house, I have abandoned my inheritance, I have given my beloved soul into the hands of her enemies. My inheritance has become to me like a lion in a thicket; she has raised her voice against me, and so I have hated her. Is my inheritance to me a hyena's den, or a den all around her? Go, gather all the wild beasts of the field, and let them come to devour her. Many shepherds have ruined my vineyard, they have defiled my portion; they have turned my desirable portion into a trackless wilderness. It has become a desolation of destruction. Because of me the whole land has been utterly laid waste, because there is no man who takes it to heart." This also seems to be the voice of our Lord and Savior. The words "I have forsaken my house"

refer to the temple in Jerusalem. The words "I have left my inheritance" refer to the former assembly of Israel, which was once his portion and the measured lot of his inheritance. This fits what he said: "How often I wanted to gather your children, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, and you were not willing. See, your house is left to you desolate." He is also the one who said, "No one takes my soul from me; I have authority to lay it down." So he says, "I have given my beloved soul into the hands of her enemies." For him the former inheritance became like a lion in a thicket. It raised its voice against him when they handed him over to Pilate and stood accusing him, all but shouting, "Take him away, take him away, crucify him!" He says, "I hated her" because of her deeds, which deserved hatred, and because she showed him nothing worthy of love. What follows, and especially the words "Because of me the whole land has been utterly laid waste," seems to point to the complete capture and captivity of the former people that came after the Savior's passion because of him, and to the final desolation of Jerusalem.

Psalm-like extract, from the same prophet, 35. "Lord, my strength, my help, and my refuge in the day of evils, to you nations will come from the end of the earth, and they will say, 'How false were the idols our fathers possessed, and there is no benefit in them! Will a man make gods for himself? Yet they are not gods.' Therefore, see, at this time I will show them my hand, and I will make my power known to them, and they will know that I am the Lord. The sin of Judah is written with an iron pen, engraved with a diamond point on the breast of their heart." After the word has prophesied about those who through Christ have come to know the God of all, it goes on to speak of the sin of the Jewish people against the Savior. It indicates that this sin will never be blotted out, in the words set down with asterisks. Someone could also apply these words to the traitor Judas, as though the Holy Spirit had known him beforehand and named him in advance.

From the Psalms, by the same author. 36. "Look, days are coming, says the Lord, when I will raise up for David a righteous Branch. A king will reign, and he will act with understanding, and he will execute justice and righteousness on the earth. In his days Judah will be saved, and Israel will dwell in safety, trusting. And this is the name by which the Lord will call them: Iosedek, among the prophets. In that day, said the Lord, I will break the yoke from their neck and burst their bonds. They will no longer work for strangers. They will work for the Lord their God, and I will raise up David their king for them." Something very similar is said in another place of the same prophet, in these words: "Look, days are coming, says the Lord, when I will raise up for you my good word, which I spoke over the house of Jerusalem and over the house of Judah. In those days and at that time I will cause a righteous Branch to spring up for David." Right after this he adds: "Thus says the Lord: A man will not be cut off from David to sit on the throne of the house of Israel. And for the priests, the Levites: a man will not be cut off from before my face to offer burnt offerings, to sacrifice, and to make an offering all the days." And again: "Thus says the Lord: If you can break my covenant of the day and my covenant of the night, so that day and night do not come at their proper time, then my covenant with David my servant can also be broken, so that he has no son reigning on his throne, and no Levites, the priests who serve me.

As the host of heaven cannot be counted, nor the sand of the sea measured, so I will multiply the seed of David my servant and the Levites who serve me." And a little later it says again: "Thus says the Lord: If I have not [established] my covenant of day and night, if I have not set in order the fixed laws of heaven and earth, then I will also reject the seed of Jacob and of David my servant, so as not to take a ruler from his seed." Who, then, could the Branch be that the Lord will raise up for David? It is the divine Word, of whom it is said elsewhere, "Look, a man whose name is Branch." He is prophesied as one who will reign, act with understanding, and execute justice and righteousness on the earth. He will also cause light to rise for souls sitting in darkness, by his heavenly kingdom. And when, as the apostle says, the fullness of the nations comes in, then all the true Israel, together with the spiritual Judah, will be saved. The Lord will call them by name, and will judge them worthy in "Iosedek," which is translated "the righteous ones of God." And in that day, after God has freed those just mentioned from their captivity under the devil, so that they no longer serve him but serve only the Lord their God, God promises to raise up David as king for them. This is none other than our Savior, who came from the seed of David, and whom the Scriptures call by this name in various places. So the "David" in the prophecy, understood as referring to our Savior, is spoken of as a man.

The "rising" that is righteous is the divinity at work in him. In other places it is called the "sun of righteousness." For the true light that enlightens every man coming into the world is none other than he. So the prophet says that God will never destroy the man who leads and presides over his church, which is the spiritual house of Israel. The word also prophesies that God's priests, in the spiritual sense, will never fail. They offer spiritual incense, and the sweet-smelling, bloodless, pure sacrifice of good works and good words. If we do not take these words in this way, it is time to convict the prophecies of being false. For neither the throne of David in a bodily sense nor the priestly service of the types still stands today. The kings from David's seed ceased from the very time of Jeremiah. The Levitical and priestly service ceased not long after the coming of our Savior, and from then until now they are not even permitted to set foot in Jerusalem. Suppose those of the circumcision say that the seed of David has not failed, because of the man they call their patriarch. Then they must be refuted, since they cannot show him sitting on David's throne, reigning on his throne and ruling Israel. For the prophecy says that these things will never fail. Yet it is plainly shown that they have failed since the time of the captivity, and from then on not one king of Israel from the seed of David can be shown. And what could they say about the priesthood, which has so plainly been abolished at the present time, though the prophecy declares that it will never be destroyed?

Of the same. 37. "Behold, days are coming, says the Lord, and I will make with the house of Israel and the house of Judah a new covenant. It will not be like the covenant that I made with their fathers on the day when I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt. For they did not remain in my covenant, and I disregarded them, says the Lord. For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the Lord: I will put my laws into their mind, and I will write them on their hearts. I will be

their God, and they will be my people. They will not teach, each his neighbor and each his brother, saying, 'Know the Lord,' for all will know me, from their least to their greatest, says the Lord. For I will be merciful toward their iniquities, and I will remember their sins no more." Plainly the Lord foretells that in days to come he will make a new covenant. It is new because it has nothing in common with the old one, which we learned earlier was given through Moses in the wilderness. What could those of the circumcision say to this? They try to look at the prophecies with open eyes, yet they would rather show them to be incomplete than yield to the truth by accepting the new covenant of our Savior's gospels. When that covenant came, the first grew old. It began to come to an end from the time Christ came and fulfilled the law and the prophecies about himself.

So the Lord says that days will come in which he will make the new covenant. That is, the covenant written in the gospel books. Next the same Lord adds that after those days he will write his own laws in the very minds of those who receive the new covenant. So they will be a people for God, and he will be God for them. They will come to know the Lord by no human teaching. They will be self-taught, as it were, or rather taught by God. One can see this being fulfilled even now. One can see how the new covenant and the Lord's laws have been written on the minds and hearts of those who have believed in God through Christ. Consider the multitude of completely ordinary men among us, who show a way of life so virtuous and wise that it is not quickly found among those who have practiced literary learning and think highly of themselves for their study of the Scriptures.

From the Lamentations. 38. "The breath of our face, the Lord's anointed [Christ], was caught in their corruptions, he of whom we said, 'In his shadow we shall live among the nations.'" Here too the divine Spirit names Christ outright, and foretold the plot of the Jews against him with the words "was caught in their corruptions." The prophets foresaw that they themselves would live in the Spirit under his shelter and shadow. They saw too that they would live among the nations, who were going to believe in Christ and through him accept the writings of the prophets.

From Baruch. 39. "Who went up into heaven, and took her, and brought her down from the clouds? Who crossed over the sea, and found her, and will bring her in exchange for choice gold? There is no one who knows her way, nor anyone who thinks about her path. But the one who knows all things knows her; he found her by his own understanding. He is the one who established the earth for all time and filled it with four-footed animals. He sends out the light, and it goes; he called it, and it obeyed him with trembling. The stars shone in their watches and were glad; he called them, and they said, 'Here we are'; they shone with gladness for the one who made them. This is our God; no other will be reckoned alongside him. He found out every way of knowledge and gave it to Jacob his servant, and to Israel, whom he loved. After this he appeared on the earth and lived among human beings." "Who went up into heaven," it says, "and took her, and brought her down," and so on. We are taught by the holy apostle that Jesus Christ, who came down, is himself also the one who went up above all the heavens.

He also received the gift of the Holy Spirit, brought it down, and poured it out on the souls of those who received it. This is why it is also said in the Psalms, "Going up on high you led captivity captive; you received gifts among men." Next, in the passage before us, the Word says, "This is our God; no other will be reckoned alongside him." Who is this but the one who went up into heaven and came down? For the question "Who went up into heaven?" is answered by "This is our God; no other will be reckoned alongside him." The words that follow make this clearer: "After this he appeared on the earth and lived among human beings." So it is plain that no other, among those who have only an acquired title of "god," will be reckoned alongside this Word of God. It says "after this he appeared on the earth," plainly meaning after he had given, through the law and the prophets, the whole way of the promise. For it says, "He found out every way of knowledge and gave it to Jacob his servant, and to Israel, whom he loved." Then after this he appeared on the earth and lived among human beings.

From Ezekiel. 40. "Therefore the Lord says this: Look, I am going to judge between the strong sheep and the weak sheep. You shoved with side and shoulder, and butted with your horns; you crushed everything that was failing. And I will save my sheep, and they will no longer be plunder, and I will judge between ram and ram. And I will raise up another shepherd over them, and he will shepherd them, my servant David. He will be their shepherd, and I will be their God, and David will be a ruler in their midst. I the Lord have spoken. And I will make with David a new covenant, a covenant of peace." Elsewhere too we take the David of the prophecy to be no one other than our Saviour, born of David's seed. For this reason we have marked this passage here as well. Who else could it be who is going to shepherd the Lord's sheep, after they have been judged by him, but the one who alone is the good shepherd? He did not look past the rational sheep of his own flock when they were being shoved aside and destroyed by the opposing powers. He laid down his own life for their salvation. God, his Father, promises to set him as ruler over them after the time of judgment, and to make with him a covenant of peace. That is when his enemies will have been put under him, and the last of all, death itself, which now stands against the Word, the wisdom and the life, will be destroyed.

From the same prophet, Ezekiel. Chapter 41. "This is what the Lord says: See, I am taking the whole house of Israel from among the nations where they went, and I will gather them into the land of Israel. I will make them one nation in my land, on the mountains of Israel. One ruler will be over them all. They will no longer be two nations, and they will never again be divided into two kingdoms, so that they may no longer be defiled by their idols. I will rescue them from all their lawless deeds in which they sinned, and I will cleanse them from all their sins in which they sinned. I will cleanse them, and they will be my people, and I, the Lord, will be their God. My servant David will be ruler among them, one shepherd for them all. For they will walk in my commands, and keep my judgments and do them. They will live on the land that I gave to my servant Jacob, where their fathers lived. They themselves will live on it, and David my servant will be their ruler forever. I will make a covenant of peace with them, and it will be an everlasting covenant with them. I will set my

holy things in the midst of them forever. My dwelling place will be among them, and they will be my people, and I will be their God."

"And the nations will know that I am the Lord who makes them holy, when my holy things are in the midst of them forever." After the gathering of the scattered spiritual and true Israel, and after the lost sheep of the house of Israel have been found, once the full number of the nations has first come in, then the Lord promises that he himself will be God to his people who are to be. He promises to set his servant David as ruler among them, to shepherd them and rule over them, not for a short and brief time but forever. Let those of the circumcision suppose that the word promises them that man, the son of Jesse. Let them picture his kingdom once more as bodily, and wait for God's promises in things that perish, that are earthly and unworthy of a divine promise. But as for us, we are persuaded that these things do not fit divine promises, and are not to be referred to David himself at all. What is said as if about him we take to mean the one born of his seed according to the flesh, our Savior and Lord Jesus Christ. We think the prophecies fit him better than that David. This is also true of the passages in the holy Scriptures that are spoken as if in David's person. For example: "The Lord said to me, You are my Son; today I have begotten you." And: "You will set me as head of the nations," which is said in the seventeenth psalm.

There it is again said as if from his person: "A people whom I did not know served me; at the hearing of the ear they obeyed me." Of whom else is it fitting to suppose that God says, "He will call on me, You are my Father," and, "I will make him my firstborn," than of our Savior, his only-begotten Son? For what great distinction was achieved by David, above the other prophets and righteous men, that these things should be said of him alone, and that it should be prophesied that he would rise again as king and shepherd of God's sheep? We take all this together, and we also give attention to the prophecy of Isaiah. It was given after David's death, and among other things about Christ it proclaims: "A rod will come out of the root of Jesse, and a flower will rise from the root, and the Spirit of God will rest on him." And what follows this. So we are reasonably persuaded that the passages here, spoken as though about David, are about the same person. For only the Christ of God, who is also called David by a transfer of the name, has been shown to be the good shepherd. He has become the leader and savior of God's flock and church. It is prophesied that the Father will set him as king over all the spiritual Israel after the Lord turns back the captivity of his people.

From Daniel. 42. It is Daniel who says: "And in the days of those kings the God of heaven will raise up another kingdom, which will last for ages and will not be destroyed. This kingdom will not leave room for any other nation; it will strike and wipe out the kingdoms, and it will stand forever, just as you saw a stone cut from a mountain without hands, and it ground to pieces the clay, the iron, the bronze, the silver and the gold." This is made known about the kingdom of Christ, which will come at the end of the ages. The stone cut from the mountain without hands would be a symbol of the Word of God, who is also called a stone in other prophecies, as in: "Behold, I lay in Zion a chosen, precious cornerstone," and: "The

stone which the builders rejected has become the head of the corner." So this passage says that he will pull down and crush the kingdoms of the world, and the rulers, authorities and world-powers, and will hold the kingdom of the saints forever.

From the same. 43. King Nebuchadnezzar threw Ananias and his companions into the furnace of fire. When he saw that the fire had done them no harm, he became an eyewitness of the marvel, and it is recorded that he said to his friends: "Did we not throw three men into the middle of the fire?" When they agreed, he said: "Look, I see four men, loosed and walking about in the fire, and there is no harm in them, and the appearance of the fourth is like a son of God." The Hebrew likewise reads "like a son of God," and the other translators have rendered it the same way. For this reason we have marked this passage, because here too the title "Son of God" is indicated.

From the same. 44. In his visions Daniel says: "I was watching in a vision of the night, and behold, one like a son of man was coming on the clouds of heaven. He came as far as the Ancient of Days and was brought before him. Authority, honor and kingship were given to him, and all peoples, tribes and languages will serve him. His authority is an eternal authority which will not pass away, and his kingdom will not be destroyed." This agrees with Daniel's own prophecy, which foretold the kingdom of Christ through the stone cut from the mountain without hands. For who else could the one coming on the clouds like a son of man and reaching the Ancient of Days be, but our Lord Jesus Christ, who for our sake took the form of a servant and became a son of man? He said, "I came out from the Father, and I am going to God." While his disciples were present and watching, he was lifted up, and a cloud took him up. As they were gazing into heaven, two men appeared in shining clothes and taught them about his second coming, telling them in advance that he would come again in a cloud. So to Christ alone was authority, honor and kingship given by the Father, so that all nations would worship him, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

From the same. 45. Daniel had prayed about the captivity of the whole people in Babylon and the desolation of Jerusalem. The archangel Gabriel appeared to him and at the same time told him the end of the seventy years of captivity and the renewal of Jerusalem. He told him the time from the renewal to the coming of Christ, then the second capture of the city that would follow, and finally the complete enslavement of the whole nation, which was carried out after the coming of Christ. His words run like this: "Daniel, I have now come out to give you understanding. At the beginning of your supplication a word went out, and I have come to tell you, because you are a man of desires. So consider the word and understand the vision. Seventy weeks have been cut short for your people and for the holy city, to bring sin to completion, to seal up sins, to blot out lawless deeds, to make atonement for injustices, to bring in eternal righteousness, to seal up vision and prophet, and to anoint a holy of holies."

"And you will know and understand: from the going out of the word [or: words] to give an answer and to build Jerusalem, until an anointed one, a leader, there are seven weeks and

sixty-two weeks. And it will return, and a broad street will be built, and a wall, and the times will be emptied out. And after the sixty-two weeks an anointing will be destroyed, and there is no judgment in it. He will ruin the city and the holy place, together with the leader who is coming. They will be cut down in a flood, and until the end of the war, which is cut short, there will be desolations. And one week will strengthen a covenant for many. In the middle of the week sacrifice and drink offering will be taken away. On the temple will be the abomination of desolations, and until the completion of the time, an end will be given to the desolation." Of those who have applied themselves to these weeks, we know only Africanus to have studied them most accurately, and with more success than the rest. It seems to me necessary first to set out his account of these passages, and then to consider whether we ourselves can add anything to the discussion. In the fifth book of his Chronographies he writes, word for word, as follows:

The passage, then, as it stands, signifies many surprising things. For now we shall confine our discussion to what is needed concerning the times and what bears on them. It is clear that these things are said about the coming of Christ, who was to appear after seventy weeks. For at the time of the Savior, or from him onward, the transgressions grow old, and sins are brought to completion through forgiveness. Lawless acts are wiped away, together with injustices, by atonement. An eternal righteousness, beyond that which comes from the law, is proclaimed. Visions and prophecies last until John, and the holy of holies is anointed. For before the Savior's coming these things did not exist, but were only expected. The angel sets the beginning of the count, that is, of the seventy weeks, which are 406 [probably 490] years, at the going out of the word to give an answer and to build Jerusalem. This happened in the twentieth year of Artaxerxes, king of the Persians. For Nehemiah, his cupbearer, made a request and obtained an answer that Jerusalem should be built, and a word went out commanding it. Until that time the city had been desolate. For after the seventy years of captivity, Cyrus sent back each one who was willing. Those who went down with Jesus the great priest and Zerubbabel, and those who followed them with Ezra, were at first prevented from building the temple and from putting a wall around the city, since this had not been ordered. So it stayed that way until Nehemiah and the twentieth year of Artaxerxes' reign. That was the 115th year of Persian rule, and 185 years from the capture of Jerusalem. Then King Artaxerxes ordered the city to be built, and Nehemiah was sent down and took charge of the work. The building was of a broad street and a wall around it, as had been prophesied. Counting from that point, the seventy weeks are completed at Christ. For if we begin the count from anywhere else and not from here, the time will not fit, and very many absurdities will meet us. If we make the starting point of the seventy weeks the time of Cyrus and the first sending back, there are a hundred years and more left over. There is still more time if we count from the day on which the angel prophesied to Daniel, and much more if we count from the beginning of the captivity.

For we find that the Persian kingdom is bounded by 230 years, that the Macedonian kingdom stretched on for 300 years, and that from there to the sixteenth year of Tiberius Caesar is 60 years. From Artaxerxes, seventy weeks are completed down to the time of Christ, by

the Jewish reckoning. Nehemiah was sent by Artaxerxes to resettle Jerusalem in the 115th year of the Persian kingdom. That was the twentieth year of Artaxerxes himself, and the fourth year of the 83rd Olympiad. From then to the time in question is 475 years. That time was the second year of the 202nd Olympiad and the sixteenth year of the rule of Tiberius Caesar. These 475 years become 490 Hebrew years when their years are counted by the lunar month. That month is, to put it simply, 29½ days. The solar cycle is 365¼ days, so the twelve-month lunar year falls short of it by 11¼ days. This is why both Greeks and Jews insert three intercalary months in every eight years, for eight times 11¼ makes three months. So the 475 years make 59 eight-year cycles and 3 months. Since three intercalary months belong to each eight-year cycle, this comes to fifteen years, lacking a few days. Added to the 475 years, these complete the seventy weeks. That is how the man mentioned above has applied the passages. Now let us, after the interpretation just given, see whether the passages can also be applied in another way. Then we will not seem to be making a rather forced account by quietly dropping the times from Cyrus to Artaxerxes. Nor will we seem to leave unexplained the reason for the division into seven weeks and sixty-two. The divine word has surely made this division with some reasonable thought and very deep understanding, saying: "And you shall know and understand, from the going out of a word to answer and to build Jerusalem until an anointed leader, seven weeks and sixty-two weeks. And it will return, and street and wall will be built." See, then, whether our account would not be free of strain if we count the times from Cyrus himself, in whose time Daniel prophesies.

For this Cyrus was the first to issue the answer about raising up Jerusalem, according to the writing in Ezra, which goes like this: "And in the first year of Cyrus king of the Persians, to fulfil the word of the Lord from the mouth of Jeremiah, the Lord stirred up the spirit of Cyrus king of the Persians. He sent out a proclamation in all his kingdom, and in writing as well, saying: 'Thus says Cyrus king of the Persians: The Lord, the God of heaven, has given me all the kingdoms of the earth, and he himself has appointed me to build him a house in Jerusalem in Judea. Who among you is of all his people? His God will be with him, and let him go up to Jerusalem'," and so on. After this it continues: "And King Cyrus brought out the vessels of the house of the Lord, which Nebuchadnezzar took from Jerusalem and put in the house of his god. Cyrus king of the Persians brought them out by the hand of Mithridates, and counted them out to Samanassar, the ruler of Judah." After this, Scripture records that the first returners laid the foundations of the temple, and that in the time between they were hindered in their zeal, up to the seventh week of years. For forty-six years are marked off from Cyrus to the sixth year of Darius, in which the building of the temple came to its end. So it is reasonable that the word set apart the first seven weeks from the rest, wanting to show the time between the first laying of the temple's foundations and its completion at the top. Cyrus reigned thirty-one years and handed the rule over to his son Cambyses. After Cambyses had reigned nine years, Darius took the kingdom, and after Cyrus he again ordered by edict that Jerusalem be built. In the sixth year of his rule, which was the forty-sixth from Cyrus, the building was completed. This is the point from

which the Jews started when they said to our Savior, "This temple was built in forty-six years,"

"…and will you raise it up in three days?" According to Josephus, the years from Cyrus to the ninth year of Darius add up to exactly [forty-nine]. In that year, he says, the building of the temple was finished. In the eleventh book of the Antiquities he states in so many words that the temple was completed in the [seventh] month of the ninth year of Darius's reign. He then adds: "They settled in Jerusalem, living under an aristocratic government combined with an oligarchy. For the priests were in charge of affairs until the descendants of Asamonaios came to reign." So the seven weeks in the prophecy are limited to that year of Darius, and it is clear why they were set apart from the rest. Now let us see what time limits the remaining sixty-two weeks. The ninth year of Darius falls in the sixty-seventh Olympiad, according to the history of the Greek chronographers. From that point to the one hundred and sixteenth Olympiad is 200 years. In that Olympiad Seleucus, after the death of Alexander, took control of all Syria and Babylonia. From there to the death of Simon, the high priest of the Jews, the first book of the so-called Maccabees indicates that 177 years of rule in Syria passed. That book ends its history at this point. From here on, Josephus marks the succession of the priests very exactly. He says that after Simon, whom I mentioned above, John, also called Hyrcanus, led the people for twenty-nine years. Aristobulus succeeded him and reigned one year. After him came Alexander, for twenty-seven years, and after him his wife Alexandra. Up to her, the total from the ninth year of Darius comes to 434 years. That total fits the sixty-two weeks, in which there were anointed leaders. These would be the high priests, who from Cyrus onward presided over the nation's affairs. It is plain from sacred Scripture, and also from the words of Josephus quoted above, that after the return from Babylon, starting with Jesus the great priest himself, they had leaders and rulers in succession. This continued down to those whom Josephus calls the sons of Asamonaios, whom the Scripture named Maccabees. The first of them to serve as high priest was Judas, called Maccabeus, who also led the people after he routed the generals of Antiochus.

After him his brother Jonathan took over both the high priesthood and the leadership of the people. Then his brother Simon became high priest. After Simon came Hyrcanus, and after Hyrcanus came Judas, who was also called Aristobulus. He was the first to put a crown on himself, in addition to the high priesthood and the kingship. After him Alexander took both the high priesthood and the kingship, and he died leaving his wife as successor. With him ended the rulers from the priestly line who are called "anointed ones" (christs), the rulers belonging to the weeks counted up in Daniel. So the saying that declares "until an anointed leader" there will be so many weeks means this. It is as if it had said more plainly that sixty-nine weeks of years would pass, that is, a period of 483 years. In that time an anointed one, a high priest, would stand at the head of the people's affairs in unbroken succession. From what we have set out it is clear to everyone that this number of years runs from Cyrus to the death of Alexander, the last of those high priests to rule. After him a woman took the kingdom of the nation, the only woman ever to do so at that time. Through her both the

Jewish rulership and the high priesthood, which had come down steadily from their ancestors, were thrown into confusion. Having taken power, she gave the high priesthood to her son Hyrcanus, held the kingdom herself for nine years, and died. After her came Aristobulus, another of the same name, who stirred up constant rebellion against his brother. He took the high priesthood away from Hyrcanus, but after the third year he himself lost the kingship as well. For the Roman general Pompey soon arrived and besieged Jerusalem with great force. He defiled the holy things, going as far as the innermost shrines of the temple, and sent Aristobulus to Rome in chains together with his children. After this, when Hyrcanus was also carried off captive by the Parthians, Herod was the first foreigner to be entrusted by the Roman senate with the kingship over the Jews. According to Josephus, he was an Idumean by his father and an Arab by his mother. But according to Africanus, whom we mentioned a little earlier, those who know his history accurately say that Antipater, who was Herod's father, was born to a certain Herod of Ascalon, one of the temple slaves at the temple of Apollo.

When the rule of the Jews had come to this state, the prediction of Jacob recorded in Moses was fulfilled, along with those of the other prophets. It says: "A ruler will not fail from Judah, nor a leader from his thighs, until he comes for whom it is reserved; and he is the expectation of the nations." It is clear both from the histories and from what we have set out that the rule over the whole nation did not cease until Herod, in whose time Christ was born. Until then it passed in succession among the Hebrews themselves. But when Herod became the first king over them who was of foreign descent, the coming of Christ was fulfilled at once. The foretold expectation of the nations also began to be accomplished in fact, as the teaching of our Savior spread through every nation. Then too the prediction in Daniel, which follows the weeks we have discussed, was sealed. It says: "And after the sixty-two weeks an anointing will be destroyed, and there is no judgment in him; and he will destroy the city and the holy place, together with the leader who is coming; and they will be cut off in a flood, and until the end of the war, which is cut short, by desolations." So we have shown, as well as we are able, how the prophecy of the weeks foretold, the earlier [fifty-seven] and the sixty-two that follow them, reached its end in the times of Herod. During those weeks it was fitting [that the office pass] according to the succession of the family. The history down to Herod's time shows that in every period some anointed one, a high priest, led the people. This is why the oracle said, "until an anointed leader." Next is the question of how, after the completion of the stated time of the weeks, an anointing was destroyed because there was no judgment in it. The oracle shows this, indicating that the anointing belonging to the high priesthood would be carried out with reasonable judgment up to the time named. This will be clear to those who pay attention to two things. The first is the ordinance of the law, in which it is commanded that the high priesthood be held for life, until death itself, by those to whom it belongs by succession of the family. The second is the history down to Herod's times. It shows that the high priests in succession were counted worthy of the honor through their whole lives, in keeping with the law about them. But under Herod himself, not only was this arrangement concerning the high priests thrown

into confusion and ruined, but so was the holy robe. Only the high priest was permitted to have it, and no one but he alone was permitted to serve in it. Herod took this authority from them and put it under his own control, and this though he was a foreigner.

If more proof of this is needed, hear the words of a witness: Josephus, himself a Hebrew, who was counted worthy of the priestly office and came from the most distinguished family among them. He set these words down in the twentieth book of his Antiquities. About the corruption of the high priesthood he writes, word for word, something like this: "When Herod was entrusted with the kingdom by the Romans, he no longer appointed high priests from the family of the Asamonaeus. He gave the honor to obscure men who were not even of priestly descent, except for one, Aristobulus. Aristobulus was the son of Hyrcanus, who had been taken captive by the Parthians. Herod made him high priest and married his sister Mariamme, since he was hunting for the goodwill of the people toward himself because of the memory of Hyrcanus. Then he grew afraid that everyone would turn to Aristobulus, and he killed him at Jericho, by arranging for him to be drowned while swimming, as we have already shown. After him Herod no longer entrusted the high priesthood to the descendants of the sons of Asamonaeus. His son Archelaus did the same as Herod in appointing high priests, and so did the Romans after him, when they took over the rule of the Jews." That is what Josephus says on this subject. About the high priest's robe he gives this account in the eighteenth book of the Antiquities: "When Herod became king, he built this fortress, which stood in a convenient position, at great expense, and called it Antonia. He kept the high priest's robe, just as he had received it, stored there, trusting that the people would start no rebellion over it. Archelaus, the king who was set up after him, who was his son, did the same as Herod. From him the Romans took over the rule and kept control of the high priest's robe, which was stored in a stone building under seal." From these things we have indisputable proof that the prophecy was fulfilled at the times described. If those of the circumcision do not agree, they should be asked for some other account of the Scripture in place of ours. They must show how, on their view, the predictions of so great a Gabriel are not proved false, if nothing of what was announced beforehand has come to pass from that time until now, when a thousand years are already drawing near.

For us, however, the word is plainly shown to be true by the accounts we have set out without any forcing. Following them, it is easy to explain how the one last week, which comes after all the others, "strengthened a covenant for many." This is the new covenant of the message of salvation, which has spread over the whole inhabited world. It is no longer proclaimed to one nation alone, the Jewish nation, but to many. For this reason it was said, "One week will strengthen a covenant for many." It is reasonable to observe that this last single week, which the word says will strengthen the covenant for the many, is not joined directly to the remaining weeks. The text has not treated the one week as it did the seven and the sixty-two weeks. In their case it divided the whole number of years into the seven weeks and then the sixty-two weeks, making the division continuous. It attached the sixty-two to the seven and left no time or event between them. Nothing is mentioned that would be an interval of time cutting apart and separating the continuous history of those weeks. But in the case

of the single week that follows, there is a long and clearly marked separation. For after the sixty-two weeks, it says first, "an anointing will be destroyed, and there is no judgment in it." It is already clear how this came to its end in the times of Herod. Then it says, "and he will destroy the city and the holy place, together with the leader who is coming." Who is the destroyer, if not the devil, the destroyer of souls? And who is the leader who comes? He is Herod, the first of them from the Gentiles to rule, and those after him who have held authority over the Jews until now. Just as the prophecy spoke in riddles of their earlier rulers, the high priests, as "an anointed leader," in the same way it called those who ruled over them from the Gentiles after those priests had ceased "a leader who comes." It says, "and he will destroy the city and the holy place together with the leader who is coming." Aquila made this clearer in his version, rendering it: "and the people of a leader who is coming will destroy the city and the holy place."

It is also clear how the people and the army of the foreign rulers did this. These rulers took over the government of the Jews after the anointed leaders, and they used the laws of the nations. They destroyed the city and the holy place. The destroyer of souls, who leads their minds, came together with the ruler who came according to the prophecy. He worked every kind of destruction, first on the people themselves and the citizens living in the city, and then on the temple and the worship once carried out in it. A divine saying points somewhere to this as the reason for Christ's coming at that very time. It says, "The Lord looked down from heaven on the sons of men, to see if there is anyone who understands, or who seeks God. All turned aside, together they became useless; there is no one who does good, not even one." Then, since those just described had been ruined, the word teaches in advance what would overtake them. It says, "and they will be cut down in the flood," and they will be cut down to such an extent "until the end of a war cut short by devastations." While these things were being completed and carried out, "one week will strengthen a covenant for many." This would be the week of the saving proclamation. Through it our Savior and Lord Jesus Christ strengthened the handing on of the new covenant among the many who were made his disciples. At one time, before the passion, he was with them and lived among them. At another time, after the ascension, he appeared to them over forty days and shared meals with them, speaking about the kingdom of God. For this reason he also commanded them not to leave Jerusalem. In the middle of this week, the plot by the Jews, on account of which he suffered, and the things that followed in the divine prediction were fulfilled. He had preached for about three and a half years, and this is established from the writing of the Gospels. This is why it says, "and in the middle of the week sacrifice and libation will be taken away." It is clear how, at the passion, sacrifice and libation were in effect taken away from them.

At that time, according to the writing of the Gospels, the veil of the temple was torn from top to bottom. According to the history of Josephus: "At Pentecost itself, at night, the priests went into the temple, as was their custom, for the services. They said that first they sensed a movement and a noise, and after that a voice as of a crowd, 'We are leaving this place.'" Josephus gives these words and other similar things in his histories. They would help us as

proof that the bodily worship of the people was in effect dissolved and abolished after the saving passion. I also know another interpretation given for the week that strengthened a covenant for many. The word takes this as a week counted in tens, and shows that the whole time of the apostles stretches to seventy years. In that time the proclamation of the new covenant was preached no longer to one nation but to many, and it was strengthened throughout the whole world. Indeed, the histories show that John, the Lord's disciple, lived on seventy years after the Lord's ascension, for the account says he remained until the reign of Trajan. On this account too, it is clear how, in the middle of this week of tens, sacrifice and libation were taken away, and the so-called abomination of desolation stood in a holy place. The time from the resurrection of our Savior to the final siege under Vespasian extends to thirty-five years. That would be half of the week as explained. At that time the old temple and holy sanctuary suffered complete destruction by fire and was razed to the ground, and it received its seal. This fulfills the words, "sacrifice and libation will be taken away, and on the temple an abomination of desolations." The saying shows that this abomination of desolation remains until the end of life, since it says, "and until the completion of the time, completion will be given to the desolation." But we have set these things out in a shortened account. It is now time to move on to Isaiah,

who alone is left to us from the whole of the old Scripture.

Chapter 4

I will try to gather the Prophetic Extracts from Isaiah, which are the only ones we have left. First, though, I will say a few things against those who are unbelieving about the prophecies, to establish the truth of the prophets. I begin with a line of reasoning that was well observed by those before us. They seem to me to have said rightly that the law itself bears witness to those under the law of Moses that the nations among whom they would live would listen to omens and divinations. "But to you," it says, "the Lord your God has not given it so." The divine word goes on to forbid them augury and all the meddlesome divination done through demons, and adds: "The Lord your God will raise up for you a prophet from among your brothers." Suppose these things had been written for them but never actually happened, and no prophets had been among them. Could they have believed the law, or the word that promised these things, when it was so plainly and obviously false? Or is it clear that they would have been led by their very craving to know the future? They would have despised their own religion as having nothing true or divine in it, because there were no prophets among them. And they would have gone over like deserters to the oracles and divining-shrines of the nations. But in fact they clearly accepted not only Moses but many after him as prophets of God. The only evident reason is that they had received proof of the divine power in them. For these men prophesied to them not only about things far in the future, but also foretold some immediate, everyday matters. They spoke about lost donkeys, about whether the gravely sick would live or not, about prosperity coming to the people, and about countless other things recorded in their histories. If it had not happened this way, let someone answer: for what reason did they regard these men as prophets and call them so? Why did they think their words worthy of being written down? And what was the reason that they handed down these writings to their own later children as divine?

For it is the most implausible thing of all to suppose that, having seen nothing divine or marvelous in these men, they carelessly and pointlessly formed such opinions about them. Suppose someone were to run back in his mind to those times. What would he think, seeing rustic men, plain in appearance, some of them goatherds and shepherds, stepping out into the middle of the whole nation? They spoke as if from the person of God, crying out, "Thus says the Lord." They addressed kings and all the people with an undaunted bearing. They showed a wisdom beyond the human, which is still found in their prophecies today. They taught countless other hidden things through riddles and parables. They handed

down moral and doctrinal teaching to the people in the Hebrew language. Besides this, they showed a life that matched their words. They spoke to everyone without flattery and rebuked the ungodly to their faces, so that they were plotted against even to the point of death, yet they stood by the true word with a strong and noble bearing. Whoever considers these things fairly, how could he not admit that all this happened to them by truly divine inspiration? So it was only to be expected that they were admired at that time by sensible people. It was only to be expected that their words were kept in writing by the sacred scribes, and that to this day the whole nation believes they were prophets of God. Our own account of Christ shows this most clearly of all. In it we demonstrate that the whole plan of salvation concerning him took place, and that the matters of his teaching, and of the calling of all the nations through him, were known exactly in advance. We show that those inspired men spoke of them countless years before. On this point the Jews would be more credible witnesses than we are, since they treat those sacred books with every reverent honor and carry them about in public. Now that these preliminary points have been usefully made, we must go on to our subject.

From Isaiah. Chapter 1. The word that came to Isaiah the son of Amos, concerning Judea and Jerusalem. In the last days the mountain of the Lord will be made plain to see, and the house of God will stand on the tops of the mountains. It will be lifted high above the hills, and all the nations will come to it. Many nations will set out and say, “Come, let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob. He will declare to us his way, and we will walk in it. For out of Zion a law will go out, and the word of the Lord out of Jerusalem. He will judge between the nations and will reprove many peoples. They will beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into sickles. Nation will not take up sword against nation, and they will never again learn to make war.” Let those who boast in circumcision show us what this law is, and what kind of law, and to whom it is to be given, this law prophesied to go out of Zion. For the prophet says, “Out of Zion a law will go out.” Clearly this is a different law from the one given through Moses in the desert. And let them tell us what the word of the Lord is. According to the prophecy it no longer stays in Jerusalem but goes out from Zion itself and passes over to all the nations. It is going to judge between them and reprove many peoples. Then, when deep peace has come to the nations judged by the word of the Lord, those counted worthy of that peace will exchange their former weapons of war and turn their minds to the farming of their own souls. For those people, I do not know whether they have any answer to this. But for us, who believe soundly in Jesus the Christ of God, it is easy to make the whole prophecy plain. We can show it to be truly divine and wonderful, because we believe that what was prophesied has reached its fulfillment. We do not fall away from the truth by putting off the outcome of the prophecies to times without end. For we say that at the coming of our Savior Jesus Christ the law of the new covenant, the law according to the gospel, went out from Zion in bodily form and was proclaimed from there to all the nations. In the same way the saving Word himself, who is called the Word of the Lord, came forth from Jerusalem, where he stayed and taught. This is in keeping with the saying, “Behold, your house is left to you desolate.”

He poured out his grace on all the nations. These nations, judged by him and convicted of their former sins, came to a clear awareness of them and to repentance. They have stopped giving themselves to wars of the passions, and they live in the deepest peace of soul, caring for their own minds, for their cultivation and their fruit-bearing. If someone wants to take these words literally, the sense still holds good. If he takes them according to their inner meaning, it is much easier. For we should be persuaded above all, and more especially, that what is said in these passages is fulfilled in that inner sense. Still, what has been said can in some way make clear the opening of the passage we have in hand. For "in the last days," that is, plainly, now at the completion of the ages, the spiritual mountain of God has become visible, which is the divine and heavenly Word. His house is the church, built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, and for that reason it is said to be above the mountains. These things became visible after the rejection of the people of the circumcision, and after the kingdom of heaven was taken away from them. By then the earlier words of the prophecy had reached their end, in which it was said: "The daughter of Zion will be left like a shelter in a vineyard, like a watchman's hut in a cucumber field, like a besieged city." They were fulfilled also when this was fulfilled: "Hear the words of the Lord, you rulers of Sodom; give heed to the law of God, you people of Gomorrah. What is the multitude of your sacrifices to me, says the Lord?" and so on. To this he adds: "My soul hates your new moons and your feasts. You have become a weariness to me; I will no longer forgive your sins. When you stretch out your hands to me, I will turn my eyes away from you; and if you multiply your prayer, I will not listen to you, for your hands are full of blood." Notice how the word, though it stretches all this out at length, charges them here neither with idolatry nor with any other sin. Nor does it charge them with the shedding of many bloods, but of one outstanding blood, plainly the blood of Christ. About this the word clearly convicts the people when it says, "For your hands are full of blood."

For this reason it goes on to say next: "How has the faithful city Zion become a harlot? She was full of justice; righteousness slept in her, but now murderers." After all this, the word, coming to its end, again announces their rejection beforehand and says: "For they will be like a terebinth that has shed its leaves, and like a garden without water. Their strength will be like a stalk of tow, and their works like sparks. The lawless and the sinners will be burned up together, and there will be no one to put the fire out." When the prophecy has declared beforehand so many and such great things against them, it next brings in the passage we have just set out, in which it is said: "In the last days the mountain of the Lord will be made visible." Plainly, after their complete and final rejection and desolation, the prophecy shows the dispensations of the new covenant, in which the mountain of the Lord has become visible to all the nations. What mountain is it but the one who "in the beginning was with God," God the Word? He is our Savior and Lord himself, whom we have already set forth, and of whom it is also said in the Psalms: "the mountain of God, a rich mountain," and "the mountain in which God was pleased to dwell." Beside this mountain the house of God has also become visible. The house of God would be the church, which is firmly set on the summits of the apostolic and prophetic words. These things became visible at this

very mountain, and it is clear that those who received the divine Word were not Israel, nor the house of Jacob so often mentioned, but quite simply all the nations. So it is clear how and in what manner these predictions were fulfilled through the appearing of our Savior, when the mountain described and the house described became visible. We who are from the nations have come to the God of all through faith in Christ, the Son of God. Long ago we were ignorant of such great things, but now by divine grace we have come to know them, and "we have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem."

And we have been taught by the Word of God who came out from, or even came down from, the heavenly Jerusalem, since "the Jerusalem above is free, and she is our mother." So, urging one another on and hurrying one another toward this heavenly house of God, and toward Zion, itself also the heavenly mountain of the Lord, we say in our teaching and exhortation: "Come, let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, and to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will declare his way to us, and we will walk in it." Now that these things have been fulfilled and, by God's grace, have become plain to all of us, another prophecy has also reached its end. In it the saving Word himself bears clearer witness to the passage of Isaiah's prophecy now before us. He says: "I became manifest to those who did not ask for me; I was found by those who did not seek me. I said, 'Here I am,' to a nation that did not call on my name." If someone does not take the passages this way, what other mountain or house of God could he point to, of which the prophecy speaks? For the things it describes were not at that time bodily visible. These words can also be applied in another way, to the second coming of Christ, so that the prophecies would be fully fulfilled then rather than now. It should also be noted that almost the same words appear in the prophecy of Micah.

Psalm. By the same author. Second passage. "Behold, the Master of Sabaoth will take away from Judea and from Jerusalem the strong man and the strong woman, the strength of bread and the strength of water, the giant and the strong man, the man of war, the judge, the prophet, the diviner, the elder, the commander of fifty, the admirable counselor, the wise master builder, and the understanding hearer. And I will set young men over them as rulers, and mockers will lord it over them." And so on. After this God adds: "I will not be the leader of this people, because Jerusalem has been abandoned and Judea has collapsed, and their tongues speak with lawlessness, disobeying the things of the Lord. For now their glory has been humbled, and the shame of their face has stood against them. They have proclaimed and displayed their sin like that of Sodom. Woe to their soul, because they have plotted an evil plan against themselves, saying, 'Let us bind the righteous man, because he is troublesome to us.' Therefore they will eat the fruits of their works." The book called the Wisdom of Solomon says something very similar to what is said here about the righteous man: "Let us lie in wait for the righteous man, because he is troublesome to us and opposes our words." In that book it is clear from the wording that these things are said about Christ. So here too the prophecy is about those who plotted against him, and who plotted an evil plan more against themselves than against him. That is why the word fittingly pronounces a lament over them, with the words "Woe to their soul."

It also sets out the punishment that awaits them, saying, "Therefore they will eat the fruits of their works." For whatever kind of seed they sowed against Christ, that is the kind of harvest they will reap at God's judgment. Even in this present life, see whether the prophecy's opening statement was not fulfilled on them after the plot against Christ. It says, "Behold, the Master, the Lord of Sabaoth, will take away from Judea and from Jerusalem the strong man and the strong woman." It is true: the divine and heavenly grace that once lived as a citizen among them has been taken away from them. You can no longer find among them a prophet or a diviner. And where is their man of war, or their judge, the admirable counselor, or the understanding hearer? They may seem to share in spiritual bread by reading the sacred words of God. But consider whether the power and strength stored up in the divine Scriptures has not been taken away from them. Plainly, in addition to this, Jerusalem has been abandoned, and everything else has been fulfilled on them because of that one sin against Christ. For the word says, "Woe to their soul," and it adds the reason for the lament: "because they have plotted an evil plan against themselves, saying, 'Let us bind the righteous man, because he is troublesome to us.'"

Psalm 3. "My people, those who call you blessed lead you astray, and they confuse the path of your feet. But now the Lord will take his place for judgment, and he will set his people on their feet. The Lord himself will come to judgment with the elders of the people and with its rulers." The words "now the Lord will take his place for judgment" do not seem to be about the God of the universe, and still less the words "the Lord himself will come to judgment with the elders of the people and with its rulers." It would fit better to take these as prophecies about God the Word, who is also called Lord. For the very Word of God, who has been proclaimed to all under heaven, will take his place in judgment with everyone, and he will leave none of the ungodly any room for a defense, since his teaching has reached the ears of all. Jesus Christ will come to judgment especially with the elders of the people and with its rulers, since they were the ones who gathered together against him and prepared the plot against him. They called the people they ruled blessed, and so led them astray. They called evil good, and they declared our Saviour's good words to be evil.

Psalm 4. "And the Lord went on to speak to Ahaz, saying: Ask a sign for yourself from the Lord your God, either in the depth or in the height. And Ahaz said: I will not ask, and I will not test the Lord. And he said: Listen now, house of David. Is it a small thing for you to give trouble to men, and how is it that you give trouble to the Lord? Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign. Behold, the virgin will conceive in the womb and will bear a son, and you shall call his name Emmanuel. He will eat butter and honey. Before he knows or chooses evil things, he will choose the good; for before the child knows good or evil, he refuses to be wicked, so as to choose the good." Let those of the circumcision who do not accept the coming of our Saviour Jesus Christ tell us who the virgin is who, according to the prophecy, will conceive in the womb and bear the son called Emmanuel. But suppose they say that the Hebrew does not say "virgin" but "young woman." Then we must answer that the first men who translated the Scripture, under God's providence, were no ordinary men. There were seventy of them, chosen as the best from the whole people, and in their

own time they had given no small proof of their wisdom. Besides, what remarkable sign would the word be promising, as if it were something wonderful to be given to the house of David by the Lord himself, if it spoke of a mere young woman? Nothing stops us, even if the Hebrew, as they say, has "young woman," from taking the words as spoken about a virgin. In Leviticus, for example, you will find a girl who is admittedly a virgin, betrothed to a man but violated by another, and Scripture calls her a "young woman." And so it would be fitting that, because of their unbelief, the Lord should give the house of David this sign: that a virgin would give birth in a way beyond expectation. That is why the child to be born is also proclaimed as someone wonderful.

The prophecy says that from childhood, and one might say from his very birth, he would refuse what is evil and choose what is good. His name was also announced beforehand in a wonderful way: Emmanuel, which means "God with us." We who confess him, and who sense his divine and unspeakable visit to all people through his power, might well say this of him. Emmanuel, "the God with us," could also be said for this reason. The Father and God of the universe is beyond not only mortal nature but all rational nature. The Son, however, is fittingly called the God with us, because of his coming to live among us. I remember hearing one of the Jews say that this was prophesied to Ahaz about Hezekiah, who was born of him and reigned after him. But note that Hezekiah is shown to have been born long before Ahaz became king, and before this very prophecy was spoken to him. Hezekiah succeeded Ahaz after Ahaz had reigned sixteen years, and he was twenty-five years old when he began to reign. So his birth came nine years before his father's accession to the throne. The words set out above were spoken to Ahaz when he was already king, and they prophesy the marvelous and wonderful birth of Christ that I have described. As for what each phrase of the wording means, the student who is eager to learn will find out by reading the commentaries of that admirable man on these passages.

Psalm 5 [the author's heading]. "And the Lord said to me, Take for yourself a new large scroll [of paper], and write on it with a man's pen: 'Quickly make plunder of the spoils,' for it is at hand. And take as faithful witnesses for me men, Uriah the priest and Zechariah son of Barachiah. And I went to the prophetess, and she conceived and bore a son. And the Lord said to me, Call his name, 'Quickly plunder, swiftly make spoil.' For before the child knows how to call father or mother, he will take the power of Damascus and the spoils of Samaria before the king of the Assyrians." To record the marvel that was about to come to pass, the prophet is commanded to take a new, large scroll with nothing written on it. By this I think the gospel of the new covenant is indicated. He is also told to take faithful men as witnesses for the Lord. One of them is said to be a priest. The other, I think, was a prophet, for the book of Chronicles mentions him too. I take these two as a symbol of the prophets who bore witness to the coming of our Savior Jesus Christ, and of the priests who stood long ago as a type of him. After this it says, "And I went to the prophetess, and she conceived and bore a son," and so on. It would be quite unseemly, and foreign to the dignity and purity of a prophet, to suppose so lightly that the prophet, in the very act of being inspired by God, and for the sake of the witnesses just mentioned, went in to a woman for

shameful intercourse, even though she too was a prophetess. What plausibility could there be in daring to say that he approached her, that she conceived, and that she bore a son? No, I hold that this prophecy also belongs with the meaning of the one set out before, in which it was said, "Behold, the virgin will conceive in the womb."

In the earlier passage it was foretold that the virgin would conceive and bear a son. Here the manner in which the prophecy was fulfilled is also made clear, for it says, "she conceived in the womb and bore a son." Who, then, is the one who says, "I went to the prophetess," if not the Holy Spirit speaking in the prophet? Of him it was said to Mary, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you." So it is not unfitting that she too should be called a prophetess, since she conceived by the Holy Spirit and bore the child who is there called Emmanuel but is here named differently. For it says, "Call the name of the child who is born, 'Quickly plunder, swiftly seize the spoil.'" And truly he did plunder and seize the spoil, by a hidden and divine power, from the opposing invisible and spiritual powers, so that he could say, "I have conquered the world." From them he took spoil and booty, the souls that had long been tyrannized by them, in order to proclaim release to the captives. He confesses that he has received nations from the Father as his inheritance, and these may readily be called spoils. The ends of the earth are his possession, and these too may fitly be called booty. Further, it says, "Before the child knows how to call father or mother, he will take the power of Damascus and the spoils of Samaria before the king of the Assyrians." These words too I think are said only in a spiritual sense. Either they speak of certain evil powers which our Savior's divine power brought down at the very time of his birth, or they speak of a difference among the souls who have believed in him. Of these, those who turned from idolatry to the life of the gospel would reasonably be the "power of Damascus," and those from the circumcision who accepted the Christ of God would be what are called the "spoils of Samaria."

He took these souls as spoil and booty from the spiritual enemies, and he armed them against the spiritual king of the Assyrians, that is, the devil, and prepared them to fight him. Anyone who wishes can learn these things in detail from the commentaries the holy man wrote on these passages. But if those of the circumcision demand a more bodily interpretation, we should question them in turn. Can they explain in bodily terms how Isaiah, with the witnesses mentioned above, went to the prophetess for bodily union? Who is such a prophetess? How did she conceive at once and give birth immediately? What kind of child was this, whom the Lord commands Isaiah to name "Quickly plunder, swiftly seize the spoil"? What sense does so great a name have? How is it possible, on the obvious reading, to imagine any child at all bodily taking the so-called power of Damascus and the so-called spoils of Samaria before the king of the Assyrians, and doing this before he knows how to call father or mother? And if besides this they object to what we have set out, let them show how the Christ they are expecting, when he comes, will bodily take the "power of Damascus" of the prophecy, and what spoils of Samaria, or before what Assyrians. None of these is active in the present times.

Psalm 6. "Behold, I and the children whom God has given me. And there will be signs and wonders in the house of Israel from the Lord God of hosts, who dwells on Mount Zion." The words "Behold, I and the children whom God has given me" are rightly taken, in the Letter to the Hebrews, as spoken in the person of the Savior about the apostles and those who afterward believed in him. In this passage there follows: "and there will be signs and wonders in the house of Israel." It is clear that at the time of the Savior's coming signs and wonders took place in the house of Israel such as had never been done before.

Psalm 7 [sic, the heading in the edition]. "And they will wish they had been burned up with fire. For a child has been born to us, a son has been given to us. The government has come to be upon his shoulder, and his name is called Angel of Great Counsel. For I will bring peace upon the rulers, and health to him. Great is his rule, and of his peace there is no boundary. [He will sit] upon the throne of David and over his kingdom, to set it right and to uphold it with judgment and with righteousness, from now and for ever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will do this." I think the child spoken of here is none other than the one prophesied above as to be born of the virgin, the one whom the prophetess was also said a little earlier to have borne. But the name he had above was Emmanuel, and the name after that was "Quickly plunder, swiftly spoil." Here the same child, according to the Septuagint translation, is called "Angel of Great Counsel." According to Aquila, and the Hebrew itself, "his name is Wonderful Counselor, Mighty, Strong Father, and further, Ruler of Peace." And according to Symmachus, "the name of the child will be called [wonder-working], Counselor, Mighty, Strong, Father of the Age, Ruler of Peace."

We must therefore demand of those of the circumcision what child they could point to, to whom such great titles would apply. For in our view these are descriptions of the divine power of Christ. Those who have not believed in him will wish they had been burned up with fire, rather than see their own rejection and the salvation of the nations, which the zeal of the Lord of hosts is said to bring about. Set beside this what is said in Moses, something like this: "They made me jealous with their idols, and I will make them jealous with what is not a nation; with a senseless nation I will provoke them to anger." But this is not the time, nor is it our purpose, to explain every phrase of the prophecy, such as how it is said, "upon the throne of David and over his kingdom, to set it right." On this point it is likely that those of the circumcision would stumble, because our Savior and Lord Jesus Christ has not sat in bodily fashion on the throne and kingdom of David. For this reason, I will send those who love learning to the commentaries on these passages, and we will finish the task set before us.

Chapter 8 [sic]. "Behold, the Master, the Lord of hosts, will throw the glorious into confusion with might. The lofty will be shattered by their arrogance and brought low, and the lofty will fall by the sword, and Lebanon will fall together with the lofty. And a rod will come out of the root of Jesse, and a flower will rise up from the root. And the Spirit of God will rest upon him, a spirit of wisdom and understanding, a spirit of counsel and strength, a spirit of knowledge and godliness will fill him; a spirit of the fear of God. He will not judge by

reputation, nor reprove by speech, but he will give a humble man justice, and will reprove the humble of the earth. He will strike the earth with the word of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips he will destroy the ungodly. And he will be girded with righteousness around his waist, and wrapped with truth around his sides. And the wolf will feed with the lamb, and the leopard will lie down with the kid. The calf and the bull and the lion will graze together, and their young will be together, and the lion will eat straw like the ox. And a young child will put his hand into the hole of the asps and into the bed of the offspring of the asps, and they will do no harm, nor be able to destroy anyone on my holy mountain. For the whole earth was filled with the knowledge of the Lord, like much water covering the seas. And in that day there will be the root of Jesse, even he who rises to rule the nations; in him the nations will hope, and his rest will be honor." Even those of the circumcision have not supposed that the one prophesied here is anyone other than the Christ. Yet because they imagine that the things in this passage will happen in a more bodily way, going only by a bare reading of the prophecy, they do not confess faith in our Lord Jesus Christ.

We, however, are persuaded that everything in this prophecy is worthy of God. We believe that it speaks of changes in human character, brought about by the appearing of our Saviour, which turned people from the depths of wickedness to gentleness. Even now we see how, in the churches throughout the world, after the coming of Jesus Christ, who sprang from the root of Jesse, the great majority of people have been remade. They have changed their very nature from a beastlike life. Some were wolves before, some leopards in the same way, some lions, and whatever other beasts and reptiles the prophecy lists, according to the particular kind of wickedness and evil in each person. These people have changed and, as it were, been remolded, and have come to such gentleness that they feed together with the most gentle-mannered righteous men of God, eating the same food of God's sacred words. The divine Word compared these righteous men, because of the harmlessness of their souls, to tame and very gentle animals, and to the children who are written of here. If anyone is unwilling to be persuaded by this, let him say whether it is possible to keep the wording in any other way on its obvious sense. Why, or how, will Lebanon fall together with the lofty? Let him not read the rod, or the flower from it, as figurative either. Let him show how a physical rod is said to come out of the root of Jesse, and what sort of flower is to come up from it. But if even the very stubborn man is forced to take these things in a spiritual sense, consider whether the rest also is not rightly shown by us to be fulfilled, in its meaning, in the coming of our Saviour.

These things also happened in keeping with the prophecy, after the Lord Sabaoth threw into confusion those who were once the glorious ones of the former people. The prophecy says that, lifted up by their insolence against our Saviour, they would be shattered, humbled and brought down. The Word says that Lebanon too would fall with them. It is his habit to name Jerusalem, and the worship once carried out in it in bodily form, in this way. This is clear from Ezekiel, where it is written like this: "The great eagle, with great wings, long in extent, full of talons, who has the lead, came into Lebanon and took the choice parts of the cedar." Then the prophetic word itself, in explaining the parable, teaches plainly that

Lebanon is Jerusalem. It says: "Son of man, say to the rebellious house, Do you not know what these things were? Say: When the king of Babylon comes against Jerusalem, he will take its king and its rulers." So it is clear that this Lebanon also fell, along with the lofty ones, in their insolence, at the coming of our Saviour, who came from the root of Jesse. On him the fullness of the gifts of the Holy Spirit rested. He will come again at his second and glorious coming, and he will not judge by appearance, for God does not receive a man's face. Nor will he convict by mere talk, for he is the one who searches hearts and kidneys, and who pierces to the dividing of soul and spirit. And at his coming that has already taken place, the earth was truly filled with the knowledge of the Lord, whereas before, no one knew him except those of the circumcision alone.

But the prophecy will be brought to its end more fully at that time when the fullness of the Gentiles has come in, and with the rest of the nations all Israel will be saved. Then Christ, raised from the dead, has been appointed by God to rule the nations, as it says: "And there shall be the root of Jesse, even he who rises to rule nations; in him nations will hope." Notice that Israel, Jacob or Judah is not named here at all. The prophecy plainly says that the nations will hope in the one who is to rise from the root of Jesse. The wording here agrees with Moses, who says: "A ruler will not fail from Judah, nor a leader from his loins, until he comes for whom it is reserved; and he is the expectation," not of Israel, but of the nations. And whose rest has come to be in the highest honor with God, if not his, who heard the Father say to him: "Sit at my right hand, until I make your enemies a footstool for your feet"?

Psalm 9. "And a throne will be set right with mercy, and one will sit upon it with truth in the tent of David, judging, seeking justice, and hastening righteousness." This too is prophesied about the second coming of Christ. At that time the Word of God, whose kingdom over all has been set right with mercy and kindness toward humanity, will sit in judgment with truth in the tent of David. In the same way I take it that the church of the holy ones, the firstborn who are enrolled in heaven, and all who have come under the portion of the word of God, are given the name "holy."

Psalm 10. "Behold, the Lord sits on a light cloud, and he will come into Egypt, and the handmade things of Egypt will be shaken at his presence, and their heart will be overcome within them." To take these words as speaking of the unbegotten nature of the God of all, as though he were about to ride on some cloud and visit the bodily Egypt, I judge to be neither plausible nor holy. So the prophecy must be taken as referring to the Word of God. It has already been plainly fulfilled in his first coming. In that coming he arrived on a light cloud, meaning the flesh that was formed for him from the Holy Spirit, and entered this life, which is figuratively called Egypt. He also went bodily into Egypt itself, where his mother and Joseph carried him while he was still a child. At that time, for reasons that are hidden, the demons who had formerly lived and worked in the handmade idols everywhere were shaken and moved, thrown into confusion by his presence. This is what the prophecy shows when it says, "the handmade things of Egypt will be shaken." These things will also be fulfilled

in his second and glorious kingdom from the heavens, when it is likely that he himself will be shaken. Then especially the handmade things of Egypt that have been assigned to it will be thrown into turmoil, and their heart, the prophecy says, will be overcome within them. For the divine Word will then bring everything under his own rule and will humble every height that now exalts itself against the knowledge of God. All the rest of the prophecy can be explained only by figurative interpretation.

Psalm 11. "On that day there will be an altar to the Lord in the land of the Egyptians, and a pillar to the Lord at its border. And the Lord will be a sign forever in the land of Egypt. For they will cry out to the Lord because of those who oppress them, and he will send them a man who will save them; by judging he will save them. And the Lord will be known to the Egyptians, and the Egyptians will know the Lord on that day, and they will offer sacrifices and a gift, and they will vow vows to God." Who else could the man sent by the Lord be, the one who saved the Egyptians by judging, if not the Christ of God, who took the form of a slave and was found in appearance as a man? If Egypt is understood figuratively as the life of human beings, the Egyptians would be the superstitious, who were formerly afflicted by material things. The God of all had pity on them as they were oppressed by the demons who tyrannized them. He sent the man just mentioned, who brought a salvation worthy of God. So those who in the past were shut out of the Lord's assembly by the law came to know the Lord through the appearing that was granted to them, since the Lord himself made himself known to them. And it is clear how, in the land of the Egyptians just described, an altar was set up to the Lord: it is the gatherings held in every place for prayers and the worship of God.

Someone might press the wording of the phrase "and there will be an altar to the Lord in the land of the Egyptians." If an altar is a place of sacrifices, where irrational animals are slaughtered in honor of God, then it would be most right to say that a greater and truer altar to God has come about through Christ. It stands in the whole earthly region, which is called "Egypt" figuratively, because the martyrs everywhere are offered to God as sacrifices and, as it were, slain victims on behalf of the human race. It stands also in the bodily land of the Egyptians itself, where so many martyrs, and of such stature, glorified God with their own blood. But if those of the circumcision are slow to accept what has been set out, let them tell us when, where, and by whom an altar to the Lord was set up in Egypt. Let them tell us who the man was who saved the Egyptians, and how and when the Lord became known to the Egyptians, so that they turned away from their former error and took up the knowledge of him. For that is what it means to come to know the Lord. The whole remainder of the prophecy depends on a deeper meaning, which this is not the time to unfold.

Psalm 12. "Lord, in affliction I remembered you; your discipline on us was in a little affliction. And as a woman in labor draws near to giving birth and cries out in her pain, so have we become to your beloved." (Isaiah 26:16) In the Psalms there is a heading "for the beloved," and again it is said, "the king of the powers of the beloved." It is shown in those places that the one called the beloved of God is none other than Christ. For this reason we

have marked out the "beloved" in the passage before us as well. We take him to be the very one whom a voice from heaven plainly proclaimed, saying, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."

Psalm 13. "Hear the words of the Lord, you afflicted men, and you rulers of this people who are in Jerusalem. For you said, 'We have made a covenant with Hades, and agreements with death. If a storm sweeps by, it will not come upon us. We have made falsehood our hope, and by falsehood we shall be sheltered.' Therefore the Lord, the Lord, says this: Behold, I am laying in the foundations of Zion a costly stone, chosen, a cornerstone, precious, for its foundations; and the one who believes in it will never be put to shame. And I will make justice my hope, and my mercy for balances." (Isaiah 28:14) How foolish this is, and how truly laughable: the notion of those who wait in a bodily way for one of these supposedly costly and valuable stones to be laid by the Lord himself in the foundations of a bodily Zion, a stone on which the one who believes is prophesied never to be put to shame! So let us shake off those silly Jewish tales, and the old wives' stories which the apostle called myths. Let us receive the God-inspired prophecies in a way worthy of God. So he says, "Behold, I am laying in the foundations of Zion a stone." Why does he do this? It is because the rulers of the former people had made agreements with death. They abandoned God's covenant and made a covenant with Hades in its place, and they supposed that because of this no harm would come to them. For this reason too they had set their hope on falsehood and thought they would be sheltered by falsehood. It is because of these things, since those people had fallen away from hope in God, that he promises to lay the very precious stone for those who believe. To those who said, "We have made a covenant with Hades, and agreements with death,"

Then the word comes down to them and says: "A storm sweeping past, if it passes by, shall not come upon us; we have made falsehood our hope, and by falsehood we shall be sheltered." You who trust in vain in a lie, the storm will not pass you by. Your covenant with death will not be taken away, and your hope in Hades will not stand. When the storm comes sweeping on, you will be trampled by it. It is plain that this was fulfilled upon that people at the coming of our Saviour. So, in keeping with this, we hold that the chosen stone spoken of here is none other than the holy Word of God. He is a marvelous and unexpected stone, so that those who believe in him will not be put to shame. On him, as on a firm foundation, the spiritual and heavenly Zion has been built, and this is nothing other than the church of God. "For no one can lay another foundation besides the one that is laid, which is Jesus Christ." Of him it is also said in the Psalms: "The stone which the builders rejected, this has become the head of the corner." He is also called the cornerstone. Daniel also explains this stone as referring to the kingdom of Christ, where he says: "The stone that struck the image became a great mountain, and it struck and filled the whole earth." The builders who built according to the letter of the law rejected this stone. Yet though rejected by them, he has been shown to be the head of the corner of the church from the nations, as it is said somewhere: "You will set me as head of the nations." So the one who believes on this stone will not be put to shame, and this prophecy about him too proves true.

Psalm 14. “Behold, the name of the Lord comes from far away, a burning wrath, with glory the oracle of his lips; the oracle is full of anger, and the anger of his wrath will devour like fire.” What could “the name of the Lord” be, if not God the Word, through whom all things were made? So I think this prophecy also hints at his second and glorious coming.

Psalm 15. “Thus says the Lord: Blessed is the one who has offspring in Zion and kinsfolk in Jerusalem. For behold, a righteous king will reign, and rulers will rule with justice.” This also points to the Christ of God, who said, “But I was appointed king by him.” The rulers under him would be either the apostles and those who govern the churches with God’s justice, or else divine angels, who watch over the salvation of human beings. Because of this king who reigns over Zion and Jerusalem, “blessed is the one who has offspring in Zion and kinsfolk in Jerusalem.” These words must be understood in a way worthy of the apostolic Spirit, who teaches us about the Jerusalem above and the heavenly Mount Zion.

Psalm 16. “Rejoice, thirsty desert; let the desert exult and blossom like a lily. The wilderness of the Jordan will blossom and exult, and the glory of Lebanon has been given to it, and the honor of Carmel. My people will see the glory of the Lord and the height of God. Strengthen the slack hands and the paralyzed knees. Encourage the fainthearted in mind: be strong, do not be afraid. Behold, our God repays judgment, and he will repay it. He himself will come and save us. Then the eyes of the blind will be opened, and the ears of the deaf will hear. Then the lame will leap like a deer, and the tongue of the stammerers will be clear. For water has burst out in the desert, and a ravine in the thirsty land. The waterless land will become marshes, and in the thirsty land there will be a spring of water.” He foretells that astonishing healings will happen at the coming of God. Here too, then, the Christ of God is plainly honored with the name of God. At his coming the healings just mentioned were carried out bodily upon the sufferers. Even now they are worked more wonderfully still through faith in him, as the whole human race is set free from the sicknesses of the soul. “Water has burst out in the desert, and a ravine in the thirsty land” at the coming of Christ. The drinkable, life-giving Word welled up in what was long ago a desert and thirsty land, the church from the nations. Before, it was waterless and parched, but suddenly there was a spring of the words of Jesus, the living water leaping up to eternal life.

… has rained down. Watered by this spring, the one-time desert is said to bloom like a lily, and it is commanded to rejoice and exult. The reason for the rejoicing and exulting is added: “the glory of Lebanon was given to it.” Lebanon here means Jerusalem. Earlier prophecies said of it that Lebanon would fall along with the lofty ones. When it fell, the glory it once held was given to the desert that now hears the good news, that is, the church from the nations. Along with it went the former honor of what is called Carmel, which clearly means the former people. These things plainly came to pass in fact after the coming of Christ. This agrees with the prophecy now in hand and with the voice of our Saviour himself, who said that the kingdom of God will be taken away and given to a nation that produces its fruits.

Psalm 17. “A voice of one crying in the desert: Prepare the way of the Lord; make his paths straight. Every ravine will be filled, and every mountain and hill will be brought low. The crooked things will become straight and the rough places level plains. The glory of the Lord will be seen, and all flesh will see the salvation of God, for the Lord has spoken.” (Isaiah 40:3.) John, the forerunner of our Saviour, when people asked him who he was, said, “I am a voice crying in the desert,” and so on. This is why we have set out this passage among the testimonies about Christ. We take John to be a symbol of the apostolic preaching. For the voice crying in the desert is like that: faint and unclear, not yet articulate to those who are only now being taught the basics. In the desert that was long barren, the church from the nations, such a voice commands us to prepare the way of the Lord, and so on. Anyone who cares to know these things can study them at leisure.

Psalm 18. “Go up on a high mountain, you who bring good news to Zion; lift up your voice with strength, you who bring good news to Jerusalem. Lift it up, do not be afraid. Say to the cities of Judah: Look, your God! The Lord, the Lord comes with strength, and his arm comes with lordship. Look, his reward is with him, and his work is before him. Like a shepherd he will shepherd his flock, and with his arm he will gather the lambs, and he will comfort those who are with young.” (Isaiah 40:9.) We think this too is said about the coming of the Word of God, and perhaps more about the second coming. In that coming he is prophesied to arrive as a just judge, holding the reward that he will hand out to each person according to what each has done. The rest it is not yet the time to go through, so we will turn to another passage.

Psalm 19. “Who raised up righteousness from the east? He called it to his feet, and it will go forward. He will give it before the nations and will make kings stand aghast. He will give their swords to the ground, and their bows like driven stubble. He will pursue them; the way of his feet will pass in peace; he will not come. Who has worked and done these things? He who calls it, who has called it from the beginning of the generations. I am God, the first, and for the things to come I am he. The nations saw and were afraid; the ends of the earth were astonished. They drew near, they came together, each judging how to help his neighbor and his brother. And he will say, ‘The craftsman has grown strong,’ and the smith who strikes with the hammer, driving at the same time. At one time he will say, ‘The joint is good’; they strengthened them with nails; they will set them, and it will not be moved.” (Isaiah 41:2.) Righteousness rising from the east: who could this be, if we are speaking of a distinct being with its own existence, other than the Christ of God? Of him the apostle says, “Who became for us wisdom from God, and righteousness and sanctification and redemption.” (1 Corinthians 1:30.) This righteousness was raised up from the Father’s bosom, where all the risings of intelligible light are found. What raised him up was either the plan of salvation by which he became man, or the Father himself, who gave him before the nations. The purpose was this. Their former kings were invisible, evil powers, and they were to be astonished at the strangeness of that plan. They would see so great a Son of God having neither form nor beauty. After such astonishment their swords would be given to the ground, and their bows would be like driven stubble. They would no longer hold weapons of

war or fire-tipped arrows, with which they had formerly made war on the souls under their power.

After this he says, "and he will pursue them," so that, when all of them have finally been driven off, the way of his feet may pass through in peace. "Who worked and did these things?" he asks. We understand the answer to be the kindness and love for mankind of the God of the universe, who calls her. By "her" he plainly means righteousness, which is nothing other than his wisdom. The nations saw her and feared God, though before this they had lived without the fear of God. Called from the ends and the limits of the inhabited world, they drew near to God. Those who were once far off came near to the kingdom of the heavens. So they were astonished at the strangeness of this salvation. They taught one another, and brother helped brother, and they confessed their former error about the idols, saying these very things: "So he was a carpenter and a smith, who with hammer and nails and human contrivance raised up and strengthened the gods we used to believe in. And they were nothing but lifeless carved images, which could not move on their own. Our fathers owned false idols, and there was no benefit in them." That these things were accomplished at the coming of our Savior is shown more by the witness of events than by words.

Psalm 20 (Isaiah 42:1). "Jacob my servant, I will take hold of him; Israel my chosen one, my soul has received him. I have put my Spirit upon him; he will bring out judgment for the nations. He will not cry out, nor let up, nor will his voice be heard outside. A bruised reed he will not crush, and a smoldering flax he will not put out; but he will bring out judgment to truth. He will shine out and will not be broken, until he has set judgment on the earth; and in his name nations will hope. Thus says the Lord God, who made the heaven and fixed it firm, who made the earth and what is in it solid, who gives breath to the people on it and spirit to those who walk on it: I, the Lord God, have called you in righteousness, and I will hold your hand and strengthen you; and I have given you as a covenant of a race, as a light of nations, to open the eyes of the blind, to bring out of bonds those who are bound, and out of the prison-house those who sit in darkness." That the words "Jacob my servant, I will take hold of him; Israel my chosen one, my soul has received him" are not prophesied about the Jewish people will be clear to those willing to examine each word of the passage. It is also plain from the exactness of the Hebrew. The name Jacob does not appear in it, nor does the name Israel. For this reason these names are marked with an obelus in the accurate copies of the Seventy. For no one among the righteous except our Savior Jesus Christ is such that these words fit him. Nor was the son of Isaac, called Jacob and Israel, anyone of whom the passage could be said, and I think no one doubts it. Even if someone were to apply "I have put my Spirit upon him" to others, what would he say about "he will bring out judgment for the nations," and the lines that follow, and above all "and in his name nations will hope"? And how could it be believable to apply to the Jewish people, or to Jacob the son of Isaac himself, or to any other of the righteous, the words "I have given you as a covenant of a race, as a light of nations, to open the eyes of the blind, to bring out of bonds those who are bound, and out of the prison-house those who sit in darkness"?

But let these points stand as difficulties we have raised against those of the circumcision. The Gospel, however, teaches us plainly that this prophecy was fulfilled in our Savior Jesus. When the Pharisees went out, they took counsel against him, how they might destroy him. But Jesus knew it and withdrew from there. Many followed him, and he healed them all, and he warned them not to make him known. After this the Gospel adds: "that what was spoken through Isaiah the prophet might be fulfilled, who says, 'Behold my servant, whom I have chosen, my beloved, in whom my soul is well pleased; I will put my Spirit upon him,'" and the rest, as much as is gathered in the prophecy. So he himself would be the one who was also called Jacob, being the only-begotten servant of God. As it is said elsewhere: "It is a great thing for you to be called my servant, to set up the tribes of Jacob and to bring back the dispersed of Israel." This one, then, heard from the Father, along with the other things, also the words, "I have given you as a covenant of a people, as a light of the nations." He brought forth judgment to the nations, so that they might live by a settled, sound reasoning according to the holy Gospel. It is plain how the nations that believed in him have hoped in his name. It is plain also how he was shown to be a light of the nations, so that through the light of his word the eyes of the mind were opened, of those who had long been filled with such blindness. He also led out of bonds those who were formerly held fast by the chains of their own sins, and out of the house of the devil's prison those who sat in darkness through ignorance of the God of the universe. It is left to the one who loves learning to examine each word of the prophecy, and to apply what follows to the Christ of God in keeping with what we have said.

"Be my witnesses, and I too am a witness, says the Lord God, and the servant whom I have chosen." Who could the servant be whom the Lord God has chosen, whom he also counts together with himself as a witness among those who bear witness to him? Surely it is the one of whom it was said in the preceding passage, "Jacob my servant, I will take hold of him," and so on. These words were clearly shown to have been prophesied of our Savior and Lord Jesus.

"I made the earth, and man upon it. I with my hand made firm the heaven; I gave orders to all the stars. I raised him up with righteousness as king, and all his ways are straight. He will build my city, and he will bring back the captivity of my people, not with gifts nor with ransoms, says the Lord Sabaoth. Thus says the Lord Sabaoth: Egypt has labored, and the merchandise of the Ethiopians, and the Sabeans, tall men, will cross over to you and will be your slaves. They will follow behind you in handcuffs, and they will cross over to you and bow down to you, and they will pray in you, because God is in you, and there is no God besides you. For you are God, and we did not know it, the God of Israel, the Savior. All who oppose you will be ashamed and put to shame, and will go in disgrace." The Father raised Christ from the dead, so that he might be king with righteousness, reigning on Zion, his holy heavenly mountain. He raised him for this reason, because all his ways, it says, have become straight, having nothing crooked or twisted. For he did not commit sin, nor was deceit found in his mouth. This one also built the city of God, both his holy church on earth and the heavenly Jerusalem.

He did this by bringing back the captivity of his people. That captivity came about long ago under the spiritual Nebuchadnezzar and the evil powers under him. He brought back this captivity without paying a ransom to the captors and without persuading them with gifts. He marched out against them and overcame them by conflict. So, glorying in the achievement, he could say, "I have conquered the world." The multitudes who have turned back from their former error to know the true God through him bear witness to this. Or else let those of the circumcision say to whom else this prophecy could apply. It clearly confesses as God the one it prophesies about. "For these also," it says, "will be your slaves, and will follow after you, and will worship you, and will pray in you, because God is in you, and there is no other except you. For you are God, and we did not know it, the God of Israel, the Savior." Here it is clear that the word addresses the very one of whom it was said, "God is in you," and says to him, "and there is no other except you; for you are God, and we did not know it." These words are to be understood as spoken in the person of those who have recognized the Christ of God made man. God the Father happened to be dwelling in him, according to the saying, "I am in the Father, and the Father is in me."

For this reason the words "There is no God except you" fit him alone. The reason is that only the divinity of the Word is united and blended with the Father's kingdom, and so the glory and rule of both are thought of as one. In the words "Egypt has labored, and the merchandise of the Ethiopians, and the Sabaeans, tall men, will cross over to you," I think the prophet shows two possibilities. Either certain spiritual opposing powers took up a struggle against Christ and have been made subject to him. Or else these are souls of such a kind, who at first resisted the Word but later took up slavery under him for their own good. I think the words "They will be your slaves, and will follow behind you bound in handcuffs, and will pray in you" are also said of these. But the words "All who oppose you will be ashamed and put to shame, and will go in shame" are prophesied about those who did not repent. They remained enemies and foes, and were by no means willing to take upon themselves the yoke of the word of Christ. So much for what the passage makes clear about Christ. It would also be fitting to set this passage before not only those of the circumcision but also those who suppose the Savior to have been a mere man: the Ebionites, or the followers of Artemon, and Paul of Samosata. For even through these words the divinity of Christ is clearly shown to those who are hard to persuade about him.

"Hear me, Jacob, and Israel, whom I call: I am the first, and I am forever. My hand founded the earth, and my right hand made the heaven firm. I will call them together, and they will stand and be gathered and hear. Who announced these things to them? The Lord loved you; I did your will against Babylon, to remove the seed of the Chaldeans. I have spoken, and I have called; I brought him, and I made his way prosper. Draw near to me and hear this: I have not spoken in secret from the beginning; when it came to pass, I was there. And now the Lord, the Lord, has sent me, and his Spirit." The person who speaks all this in the passage is one and the same. Who else could be the Lord who made the heaven and fixed it, and made the earth firm, who says "I am the first, and I am forever," and who adds in what follows (according to all who have translated the divine Scripture), "And now the Lord

God has sent me, and his Spirit"? Who else could he be but the holy Word of God? After the unbegotten beginning, he is named the first God of all created things. Of him it is written elsewhere, "He sent his word and healed them"—

For he is the one through whom all things came into being, both those in the heavens and those on the earth, whether visible or invisible. The Lord God the Father sent him, and with him the Holy Spirit, to carry out the plan for the salvation of men. The passage would also suit an argument against the Jews, since it teaches that the Lord who made all things is a different Lord from the God of the universe. He confesses that he was sent by that God when he says, "And now the Lord has sent me." He is the one to whom the Father speaks, giving his command at the making of the world: "Let there be light," and "Let this and that come to be," and also "Let us make man in our image." In this way it is also written in the Psalms: "He himself spoke, and they came to be; he himself commanded, and they were created." For it is plain that whoever gives a command and speaks does so to someone other than himself, and gives his orders to that other. To examine each phrase of the passage, however, is not the business of the present work.

Psalm 24. "Listen to me, you islands, and pay attention, you nations. After a long time it will stand, says the Lord. From my mother's womb I called my name. He made my mouth like a sharp sword, and under the shelter of his hand he hid me. And he said to me, 'You are my servant, Israel, and in you I will be glorified.' And I said, 'I have labored in vain; I have spent my strength for emptiness and for nothing.' Therefore my judgment is with the Lord, and my toil is before my God. And now thus says the Lord, who formed me from the womb to be his servant, to gather Jacob and Israel to himself: I will be gathered and glorified before the Lord, and my God will be my strength. And he said: 'It is a great thing for you to be called my servant, to raise up the tribes of Jacob and to bring back the scattered of Israel. Behold, I have set you as a covenant of the race, as a light of the nations, that you may be salvation to the end of the earth.' Thus says the Lord, who has delivered you, the God of Israel: 'Make holy the one who despises his own soul, who is abhorred by the nations, the servants of rulers. Kings will see him, and rulers will rise up and worship him, for the Lord's sake, because the Holy One of Israel is faithful, and I have chosen you.' Thus says the Lord: 'In an acceptable time I heard you, and in a day of salvation I helped you. I formed you and gave you as a covenant of the nations, to establish the earth and to inherit the deserted places, saying to those in bonds, "Come out," and to those in darkness, "Be uncovered." They will be fed along all the roads, and their pasture will be on every path. They will not hunger or thirst, neither scorching heat nor sun will strike them; but the one who has mercy on them will comfort them and lead them by springs of water. I will make every mountain a road, and every path a pasture for them.'" Isaiah.

49, 1. It is likely that those of the circumcision suppose that what is said in this prophecy was spoken about themselves, since it says, "And he said to me, You are my servant, Israel, and in you I will be glorified." But besides the fact that these words do not fit them, it is clearly shown from what follows that the things said are prophesied about another Israel.

For it is written, “And now thus says the Lord, who formed me from the womb to be his servant, to gather Jacob and Israel to himself.” And again, “He said to me: It is a great thing for you to be called my child, to raise up the tribes of Jacob and to bring back the scattered of Israel.” Moreover the words, “Behold, I have set you as a light of the nations, that you may be salvation to the end of the earth,” point to someone extraordinary and wonderful as the subject. Who could this be but our Lord Jesus Christ? He was already given the names Jacob and Israel earlier in the passages above, in the words, “Jacob is my servant, I will take hold of him; Israel is my chosen one, my soul has welcomed him.” For he alone truly sees God the Father. He is called Israel, which is translated “seeing God,” with respect to his divinity. He is called Jacob, which means “heel-catcher” or “supplanter,” with respect to his becoming man and overcoming all the opposing powers. Notice also how well the two passages agree with each other, the one before us and the one where it was said, “Jacob is my servant,” which refers to Christ. For as it is said there, “Jacob is my servant,” so it is said here, “It is a great thing for you to be called my child.” As it is said there, “Israel is my chosen one,” so here, “For the holy one of Israel is faithful, and I have chosen you.” Again, it is said there, “I have given you as a covenant of a people, as a light of the nations, to open the eyes of the blind, to bring out of bonds those who are bound, and from the prison house those who sit in darkness.”

But in the passage before us it says, “Behold, I have set you as a light of the nations, to establish the earth and to inherit a desolate inheritance, saying to those in bonds, ‘Come out,’ and to those in darkness, ‘Be uncovered.’” That these prophecies fit no one but our Savior alone will be clear to those who consider the multitude of the nations who have set their hope on God, the God of all, in him and through him. For these he was set by the Father as a light. When it says, “to establish the earth,” it means to bring the soul, which was long in turmoil and disorder, back to its natural stability and order. And “to inherit a desolate inheritance” points to the church from the nations. Before his coming it was desolate, and it received its inheritance from the one who said to him, “Ask of me, and I will give you the nations as your inheritance.” According to the prophecy about him, he told those in bonds to come out. In the plain sense this was so with Lazarus, who was bound with grave-cloths and had been four days in the tomb. He said, “Lazarus, come out here,” and let him go free. In part, in a deeper sense, it was so with the daughter of Abraham, whom Satan had bound for eighteen years, and whom he also freed from her weakness and sent away whole. But in general it was so when he gave forgiveness of former sins to all who were held fast by the cords of their own sins, since he alone has authority to forgive sins. Even now, through his teaching, he commands these people to come out of their former bonds, saying to each one, “See, you have become well; sin no more.” Besides these, even now he commands those still buried in ignorance and wickedness to be uncovered. He does this as the Word of God, who tests hearts and kidneys, and who judges the thoughts and intentions of the heart. So that we may run through this as briefly as possible, we will also fit the earlier verses to what is said about Christ. We will take them up again from the beginning and set out our understanding of them.

Although the prophet has often spoken plainly to the people of the circumcision, and even calls on them by name, whether as Jacob or as Israel, here he does not direct the prophecy to them. Instead he summons islands and nations to listen to what will be said. The Lord's promise here concerns the calling of the nations, who were formerly wholly unbelieving and strangers to the worship of God. Part of what is meant by "islands" is the souls that once, in a certain way, lay beneath the sea, swamped by the heavy waves of life and by the very salty currents of wickedness. We must then consider what the Lord himself teaches about himself in these words. "From my mother's womb," he says, "he called my name." This clearly refers to Christ, for the words are his, as we have learned from the writing of the Gospel. When Joseph did not understand about Mary's conception, Gabriel, a servant of the Father's will, appeared to him in a dream and said, among other things, "She will bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people." The prophecy goes on: "And he made my mouth like a sharp sword." And again: "He made me like a polished arrow." For the word of God is active, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing as far as the dividing of soul and spirit, as the inspired apostle taught. It would be most fitting for this to be said to him alone, since he became obedient to the Father even to death: "You are my servant, Israel, and in you I will be glorified." The words "And I said, I have labored in vain," and what follows, could be spoken by the Savior because so few lived according to his Gospel. And since he came only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel, it is right to say that he came first of all "to raise up the tribes of Jacob and to bring back the dispersion of Israel."

But next, because not all of those people received him, the words are added, addressed to him: "Behold, I have set you as a light for the nations, that you may be for salvation to the end of the earth." After this the Lord, God and Father, who rescued him from all who gathered against him, commands us to make him holy. He says, "Sanctify the one who despises his soul." For he truly did despise his own soul. He emptied himself and became a curse for us. He took up our sins and, for our sake, scorned shame, even to death, and death on a cross. After this the text says, "the one abhorred by the nations, the servant of rulers." It is plain that those enslaved to the rulers of this age not only abhorred him at the time of his suffering, saying, "He is a burden to us even to look at," but abhor him even now, as they try to overturn his teaching. So the Lord commands that this one be sanctified, foretelling his glorious coming. The prophecy that follows, beginning "I have given you as a covenant of nations" and so on, is a foretelling of the calling of the nations. But these words are more spiritual and are to be explained by their meaning alone, and to examine them at greater length does not belong to the present work.

Psalm 25. This is what the Lord says: What is this certificate of divorce of your mother, with which I sent her away? Or to which creditor did I sell you? Look, you were sold for your sins, and for your lawless acts I sent your mother away. For I came, and there was no one who answered. Is my hand not strong enough to redeem? Or do I lack the strength to rescue? Look, at my rebuke I will make the sea a desert, and I will turn rivers into wasteland. Their fish will dry up for lack of water, and they will die of thirst. I will clothe the heaven in

darkness, and I will make its covering like sackcloth. The Lord, the Lord, gives me a tongue of instruction, so that I may know when I must speak a word. He appointed it for me early, early in the morning. He added an ear for me to hear, and the instruction of the Lord opens my ears. I am not disobedient, and I do not talk back. I gave my back to the whips, and my cheeks to blows, and I did not turn my face away from the shame of spitting. And the Lord, the Lord, became my helper. Therefore I was not put to shame, but I set my face like solid rock, and I knew that I would not be shamed, for the one who justifies me is near. Who is the one who contends with me? Let him come near. Look, the Lord, the Lord, helps me; who will do me harm? Look, all of you will wear out like a garment, and a moth will eat you up. Who among you fears the Lord? Let him obey the voice of his servant. You who walk in darkness and have no light, trust in the name of the Lord and lean on God. Look, all of you kindle a fire and keep a flame burning. Walk by the light of your fire and by the flame you have kindled. This has happened to you because of me; you will lie down in grief.

The passage before us clearly shows the divinity of the Word: that he existed before he became man, and that, having become man, he was going to suffer the things recorded in the Gospels. For who else could be the one who says, "Is my hand not strong enough?", and what follows up to "I will clothe the heaven in darkness, and make its covering like sackcloth," if not the Word of God? So the one who said such great things goes on to say, "The Lord gives me a tongue of instruction, so that I may know when I must speak a word." And then he continues with the rest, saying, "I am not disobedient, and I do not talk back. I have given my back to the whips, and my cheeks to blows," and so on up to "for the one who justifies me is near." For we say that the Word suffered by his power, suffering together with the man he had taken up. I do not know, then, whether anyone could give an account of this prophecy who refuses to accept that there is a second subsistence, that of God the Word, after the first and unbegotten one, the Father and God of all. We, however, are rightly convinced that this is plainly God the Word. He is the one who speaks here, among the other things, the words "I will clothe the heaven in darkness," and who then goes on, in the person of the man he took up, to say, "The Lord gives me a tongue of instruction, so that I may know when I must speak a word." To whom else but the man of our Savior would it fit to say, "Who is the one who contends with me? Let him stand against me"? Or of whom could the words from "Who among you fears the Lord? Let him obey the voice of his servant" be said, if not of Christ alone? According to the Scriptures he despised shame, emptied himself, and humbled himself even to the whips. According to this very prophecy about him, Pilate had him flogged and handed him over to be crucified. And he endured blows and spitting at the time when the high priest tore his clothes at his words and declared that he had blasphemed.

For then they spat in his face and struck him with their fists, and others slapped him, saying, "Prophesy to us, Christ: who is it that hit you?" The opening part of this passage seems to be spoken about the synagogue of the Jews. For it says, "Behold, you were sold for your sins, and for your lawless deeds I sent away your mother." For he came to the lost sheep of the house of Israel, and found no one among them [who was a real man]. He called them

first, but the people were not obeying. So it says, "Because I came and there was no man; I called and there was no one who obeyed." The last part of the passage, in keeping with this, turns after their rejection to the calling of the Gentiles. It begins at the words, "Who among you fears the Lord? Let him listen to the voice of his servant." For we were truly the ones walking in darkness. Before the coming of our Savior we had no light. But now, by the grace of God, we trust in the name of the Lord and are firmly supported by God. But to those who did not believe in Christ, to whom the earlier words were also addressed, "Behold, all of you will grow old like a garment, and a moth will eat you up," the text then adds: "Behold, all of you are kindling a fire," and what follows. In these words it is clear that the saying "This has happened to you because of me" is spoken in the person of Christ. He is reproaching them and exposing the lawlessness the Jewish people committed against him.

Psalm 26. Thus says the Lord: "Because of you my name is continually blasphemed among the nations. Therefore my people will know my name. Therefore on that day they will know that I am the one who speaks. I am here, like the springtime on the mountains, like the feet of one bringing good news, announcing a report of peace, like one bringing good news of good things. For I will make your salvation heard, saying, 'Your God will reign in Zion.'" This prophecy would fit the Savior very reasonably, since in his coming the words "I am the one who speaks; I am here" were fulfilled. The words "Because of you my name is continually blasphemed among the nations" were spoken to the former people. But the words "Therefore my people will know my name on that day" would be understood of the Gentiles who have believed in him. So he is the same one who earlier spoke to people, sometimes through angels and sometimes through prophets. And then he came to those same people again and proclaimed salvation to all through himself. The lover of learning who investigates this will know what meaning it carries.

Psalm 27. "And the Lord will uncover his holy arm before all the nations, and all the nations, the ends of the earth, will see the salvation that comes from God. Depart, depart, go out from there, and touch nothing unclean. Go out from the midst of her and be set apart, you who carry the vessels of the Lord. For you will not go out in confusion, nor will you travel in flight. The Lord will go before you, and the God of Israel who gathers you. Look, my servant will understand, and he will be lifted up and raised very high. Just as many will be astonished at you, so your appearance will be dishonored by men, and your glory by men. In the same way many nations will marvel at him, and kings will shut their mouths. For those to whom nothing was announced about him will see, and those who have not heard will understand." (Isaiah 52.) "Lord, who has believed our report? And to whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed? We announced it as of a child before him, as a root in a thirsty land. He has no form or glory. We saw him, and he had no form or beauty, but his appearance was without honor, falling short of the sons of men. He was a man under the blow, who knew how to bear weakness, because his face was turned away. He was dishonored and not esteemed. This man bears our sins and is pained for us, and we considered him to be in toil, in affliction and under the blow. But he was wounded for our sins and made weak for our lawless deeds. The discipline that brings our peace was upon him, and by his bruise

we were healed. All of us like sheep went astray. Each man went astray in his own way, and the Lord handed him over to our sins. And he, because he was afflicted, does not open his mouth. Like a sheep he was led to slaughter, and like a lamb silent before its shearer, he does not open his mouth. In his humiliation his judgment was taken away. Who will describe his generation? For his life is taken away from the earth; because of the lawless deeds of my people he was led to death."

"And I will give the wicked in place of his burial, and the rich in place of his death, because he did no lawlessness, and no deceit was found in his mouth. And the Lord wills to cleanse him from the blow. If you give an offering for sin, your soul will see long-lived offspring. And the Lord wills, by his hand, to take away from the toil of his soul, to show him light and to form him with understanding; to justify the righteous one who serves many, and he himself will bear their sins. Therefore he will inherit many, and he will divide the spoils of the strong, because his soul was handed over to death, and he was counted among the lawless. And he himself bore the sins of many, and because of their lawless deeds he was handed over." (Isaiah 53.) "Rejoice, barren woman who does not bear; break out and shout, and be glad, you who are not in labor, for the children of the desolate woman are more numerous than those of the woman who has a husband." (Isaiah 54.) And when else but at the coming of our Savior Jesus Christ did the Father and God of the universe uncover before the nations his great arm, which is none other than his Word? And when they saw the salvation God had given them, they are commanded to depart from their former error, and no longer to touch the unclean things in which they used to wallow, wrapped up in shameful and defiling practices. It is no small matter to separate oneself from the way of life handed down from one's fathers and from ordinary association with other people. For this reason the Lord himself promises to travel with them and to gather those who carry his vessels. He clearly means the sacred teachings and the divine words. Again, as in the earlier prophecies Christ was named in various ways the servant of God, so it is said here too. It is prophesied that he will understand, be lifted up, and be exceedingly glorified, with reference to his human nature, about which these things are said. In truth many were astonished and at a loss over him, having supposed him to be a man like themselves.

They were truly astonished, because they saw him clothed in no superiority or worldly glory. He had laid aside the form of God, emptied himself and taken the form of a slave, and he performed marvels that deserved astonishment and amazement. So those who watched were struck with wonder and said, "Is this not the son of Joseph? Are his mother and his brothers not here among us?" Even to this day very many are astonished at him and at a loss. They see that his teaching has run through the whole world and is running still, and they observe the unshaken, unchanging devotion of those who have believed in him. They marvel at these things, but they do not understand the divine power by which he worked then, and by which he is still able to work such great things now. Kings truly did hold and shut their mouths before him. These were either those gathered against him at his passion (of whom it was said, "The kings of the earth stood by, and the rulers were gathered together against the same one"), or else the rulers of the nations in every age. They shut their mouths

because they often tried to hinder his word and his teaching. Yet he prevailed none the less, and shone out, glorified and lifted up on high. So he made himself known not only to those who had received the prophecies about him from their fathers but, most astonishing of all, to those to whom nothing had ever been announced about him. That means us, the nations. We had heard nothing at all from our ancestors and had learned nothing beforehand about his coming. Yet we understood that he had come, and we accepted the prophecies about him. The prophet foresaw all this in the Spirit and cries out in wonder, "Lord, who has believed our report?" This is not the same as saying "No one has believed our report." For clearly great multitudes from the nations, and some even of the circumcision, have believed the report about Christ. He also says, "And to whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed?" That is, the Word of God, who existed before.

The Word himself teaches this at the beginning of the prophecy, saying, "And the Lord will reveal his holy arm before all the nations." Next they say, "We announced before him like a child, like a root in a thirsty land. He has no form or glory, and we saw him, and he had no form or beauty," and what follows. These things too have been fulfilled. He emptied himself of the form of God. He did not take on the handsome and dignified appearance that people admire, and he did not pass through his human life with glory among men or with any cloak of worldly superiority. He took the form of a slave and servant, humbled himself, and became truly man, "a man in affliction who knows how to bear weakness." The glorious and divine face of his deity was turned away and hidden. For this reason he was dishonored by those who understood only his humanity. Among them he was not counted as the Son of God, and not even as an ordinary righteous man. Those who shared the mind of the Spirit in this say, as though explaining the reason for such a plan and teaching it, "This one bears our sins and is in pain for us." For as prophets they saw how he would become the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world. Next they add, "But we reckoned him to be in toil, in affliction and in ill-treatment. But he was wounded because of our lawless deeds." He was wounded in power when they picked up stones to throw at him. "And he has been made weak," it says, "because of our sins." For Christ shared the weakness of the weak even more than Paul, and could have said, "Who is weak, and I am not weak?" The prophet confesses that all this was suffered by the one the passage is about for the sake of himself and all the people. For he says, "He was wounded because of our lawless deeds, and he has been made weak because of our sins." Counting himself among them, he adds, "By his bruise we were healed."

The prophet saw clearly the error that the whole circumcised people would fall into over him. He also saw that there is no man who will not sin, even one who seems the most righteous of all. So he adds: "All we like sheep have gone astray; each man has strayed from his own way; and the Lord gave him up for our sins." The things that follow these words are plainly shown to have found their fulfilment in our Savior Jesus alone. So we may well wonder at the hardness of those of the former people who do not accept him. Their excuse is what they did to him. They are accustomed to laugh and sneer at it, as if he suffered things unworthy of God's care for him. Yet the prophet cries out clearly about him, besides what has been

said, that "like a sheep he was led to slaughter, and like a lamb before its shearer he is silent; so he does not open his mouth," and that "his life is taken away from the earth." Who would not marvel at what is added to all these things, hearing the prophet say, "Because of the transgressions of my people he was led to death"? What could they find to say against this, those who heard the voice of Christ with their ears and did not understand, and who looked at his coming with their very eyes and did not see? For what other righteous man could they set before us who was led to death for their sins? Who has ever been such a person as to bear the sins of the whole people, and of the prophets themselves, and to suffer pain for them, so that they all confess they are healed by his wound, saying, "This man bears our sins and suffers pain for us, and by his wound we have been healed"? And who, having a human nature, could be such that he never sinned in word or deed, so that the divine Scripture speaks truly about him when it says, "he did no lawlessness, nor was deceit in his mouth"? For what reason, then, does the word foretell that the one who is so attested will be led like a sheep to slaughter, and will be condemned to death because of the lawlessness of the people?

Let them also say whether the Christ they expect to come will undergo all the things that the prophecies announce about him, or whether nothing of the kind will happen to him. But if they stumble over faith in him because of what happened to our Savior, they could not say such things about the one they are expecting. Then, by their reckoning, the divine words must be declared incomplete and plainly false. But that is not so by our reckoning. To us the message about him was not announced by our fathers, and nothing about him was handed down. Yet we saw him and received him, as it is said in another place: "A people whom I did not know served me; at the hearing of the ear they obeyed me." Throughout the whole prophecy, what concerns him is set out more fully and more clearly. The destruction that overtook those who plotted against him is also made plain in the words: "And I will give the wicked in return for his burial, and the rich in return for his death, because he did no lawlessness, nor was deceit in his mouth." For the prophet says they killed him though he was such a man, and that this is why they would suffer such things. Next after this, the church from the nations is announced as good news. She is compared with the former people and preferred before them in the words: "Rejoice, barren woman who does not bear; break forth and cry aloud, you who are not in labor, for the children of the desert are more numerous than those of the woman who has a husband." The matters in this passage need much searching and examination. Whoever cares about the Savior's command, which says, "Search the Scriptures, in which you think you have eternal life, and these are the ones that testify about me," will search more carefully and come to know what is in them.

Psalm 28 [Isaiah 55]. "Listen to me, and you will eat good things, and your soul will delight itself in good things. Turn your ears to me and follow my ways. Listen to me, and your soul will live in good things, and I will make with you an everlasting covenant, the faithful holy things of David. See, I have given him as a witness among the nations, a ruler and commander among the nations. See, nations that do not know you will call upon you, and peoples who do not understand you will take refuge in you, for the sake of the Lord your

God, the Holy One of Israel, because he has glorified you." The passage takes these words to mean spiritual food, a divine and heavenly delight, and also a life that is not the ordinary life of the flesh but the everlasting life of the soul. The same people are promised, in advance, that an everlasting covenant will be made with them, and it says that this covenant will contain "the faithful holy things of David." What, then, could this covenant be? After the temporary covenant given through Moses, a new and everlasting covenant is to be given to those whom the word addresses. It is the new writing of the holy Gospels. It contains "the holy things of David" because of Jesus, the Christ of God, who was born from David's seed. God says that he has given this Jesus as a witness not to Israel but to the nations, to rule over them and give them commands, and not to the former people, those of the circumcision. These nations had never known him before. When they came to know that he is the Son of God, they called on him as Savior and God. And we ourselves, who had never known him at all, have taken refuge in him. We have escaped our former error and the slavery under the opposing powers.

"You will become these things," says the prophecy, "for the sake of the Lord his God, because he has glorified him." It is plain how the Father glorified him: by the voice that came to him from heaven, "I have glorified him, and I will glorify him again." Notice, too, whether the earlier passage is not closely related to the words here, which say, "Nations that do not know you will call upon you, and peoples who did not know you will take refuge in you." There it was said that those to whom nothing was announced about him will see, and those who have not heard will understand. Similar to these are the words in the seventeenth Psalm, spoken in the person of Christ: "A people whom I did not know served me; at the hearing of the ear it obeyed me." We, then, believe that the prophecies are true, and we are persuaded that they were fulfilled at the coming of our Savior. We see for ourselves how we were once wandering nations, driven by cruel demons into every form of idolatry. We did not know the one true God, and we did not listen to the voice of the prophets. Through the teaching of our Savior Jesus we have come to the knowledge of the God of all. We have believed the God-inspired Scriptures, and we have received the Word of God whom the prophets foretold, though before this we did not know him at all. Having received so great a benefit through our Savior's teaching, how could we not rightly welcome him and worship him as God, since he is the Son of our God and our own Savior?

Psalm 29. "See how the righteous man is taken away, and no one takes it to heart. Righteous men are taken away, and no one understands. For the righteous man has been taken away from the face of injustice; his burial will be in peace; he has been taken from the midst. But you, come here, lawless sons, offspring of adulterers and a prostitute. In whom have you delighted yourselves? Against whom have you opened your mouth? Against whom have you let your tongue hang loose? Are you not children of destruction, a lawless offspring?" (Isaiah 57:1). Of all who have ever been called righteous, the Christ of God alone has been shown to be truly such. For this reason he alone, properly speaking, may be called the Righteous One, so that the prophecy says of him, "See how the righteous man is taken away." From what he is taken away, the prophecy adds in the words, "For the righteous man has been

taken away from the face of injustice." Who it is that takes him away, you can hear from his own words: "No one takes my soul from me; I have authority to lay it down, and I have authority to take it again" (John 10:18). Then the prophecy says, "His burial will be in peace." Here we should note that the prophetic Scripture points not only to his death but also to his burial. This is why the holy apostle, writing to the Corinthians, says, "For I handed on to you among the first things what I also received: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, and that he was buried" (1 Corinthians

15:3). Which Scriptures does he mean, if not those that say, "From the lawless acts of my people he was led to death," and "His burial is in peace"? Nor is the righteous man just mentioned the only one taken from the midst of injustice. The prophecy says that righteous men too are taken away. These would be the holy apostles of Christ and his admirable martyrs, who are themselves called righteous by sharing in his righteousness. While these things were being carried out, it says, no one looked and no one understood. It clearly means those whose heart had grown thick and who had shut their eyes so as not to see. To them the rest of the prophecy is addressed, from the words, "But you, come here, lawless sons, offspring of adulterers and a prostitute."

Psalm 30. "And those from the west will fear the name of the Lord, and those from the rising of the sun his glorious name. For anger from the Lord will come like a violent river; it will come with fury. And the Deliverer will come for Zion's sake, and he will turn away ungodliness from Jacob, said the Lord. And this is my covenant with them from me: my Spirit, which is upon you, and the words which I have put in your mouth will not fail from your mouth, nor from the mouth of your offspring, said the Lord, from now and forever" (Isaiah 59:19). Here again the passage prophesies the calling of the church gathered from the nations through our Savior. Who else could those "from the west" be? And through whom did the people of every nation come to fear the name of the Lord, if not through the teaching of Jesus? Through it they left behind their former error, the darkness of ignorance, and fled for refuge to the God of all. Who is the one prophesied to come from Zion, to deliver Jacob and turn him from his former ungodliness? Is he not the one who came to save the lost sheep of the house of Israel, who had fallen into ungodliness? To them, it says, the Spirit of God in Christ will make a covenant, namely the words of eternal life, which the Father has given into the mouth of the Son. These words, it says, will not fail from his mouth, nor from the mouth of his offspring, from now and for all time. These would be the words of the gospel of the new covenant. Many plotted against them long ago, and still plot against them now, yet they did not fail and never will fail from the mouth of the church, which was formed from the rational and spiritual offspring of Christ. For the Lord has spoken, and he has declared that they will not be blotted out, from now and forever. For this reason, according to John, the gospel of Christ is seen as an "eternal gospel" (Revelation 14:6).

Psalm 31 (Isaiah 61:1). "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because of which he anointed me. The Lord has sent me to bring good news to the poor, to heal the broken-hearted, to proclaim release to captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to proclaim the Lord's acceptable year

and the day of recompense to our God; to comfort all who mourn, to give to those who mourn in Zion glory instead of ashes, the oil of gladness for those who mourn, a garment of glory instead of a spirit of weariness. And they will be called generations of righteousness, a planting of the Lord for glory." This is Jesus, the Christ of God, who came forth from the root of Jesse. On him the seven Spirits of God have come to rest. He loved righteousness and hated lawlessness, and he was anointed by God his Father with what is called the spiritual oil of gladness. Once, in the time when he had become man, he took Isaiah in his hands and read this passage. Then he closed the book and said, "Today this Scripture has been fulfilled." For he was in truth the one sent from the Father to bring the good news of the kingdom of heaven to those who are poor in spirit. To them he also said, "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." He was sent also to heal those who are broken in heart, of whom it is said, "God will not despise a broken and humbled heart." Beyond this, he came to proclaim the forgiveness of sins to those who long ago had been taken captive by the spiritual Nebuchadnezzar. That is why he said boldly to the paralytic, "Child, your sins are forgiven you." He also came to give sight to those whose mind's eyes were damaged and who, like Samson and Zedekiah, had been blinded by spiritual foreigners and Babylonians. Among those whom he healed were also the physically blind. He made them see when they believed in him and cried out loudly, "Have mercy on us, Son of David."

He is also the one who called "the Lord's acceptable year," which he proclaimed after John was shut up in prison. He taught about the kingdom of God and about our judgment, in which each person will be given the penalty his deeds deserve. Beyond this, he came to comfort those who mourn with the praiseworthy mourning that is according to God. He promised them a blessing when he said, "Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted." He came, moreover, so that glory might be given to those who mourn in Zion. Who could these be but those who seek their own homeland and keep alive the constant memory of the heavenly city? Such was the man who knew himself to be a stranger and sojourner on the earth, and who groaned, "Woe to me, that my sojourning has been prolonged." Such too are those who wept by the rivers of Babylon when they remembered Zion. To these the Christ of God fulfills the comfort he promised to those who mourn. He will give them glory when they are released from mourning. In place of the ashes they sharpened for themselves by mourning in this present life, he will give the oil of gladness, anointing them also with the oil of rejoicing. So they will become sharers in his anointing and his kingdom, and can say themselves, "For we have become partakers of Christ." The Christ also prophesies that he will give to those who mourn in Zion "a garment of glory instead of a spirit of weariness." They had grown weary over the affairs of this life, as people displeased with what human beings do. They mourned most of all for this reason: not only because they saw God's promises from far off, but also because, out of sympathy and love for humanity, they suffered and grieved with their own weak fellow members. They all but cry out, in the apostle's own spirit, "Who is weak, and I am not weak? Who is made to stumble, and I do not burn?"

Psalm 32. “Let my soul rejoice in the Lord, for he has clothed me with a garment of salvation and a tunic of gladness. He has set a turban on me as on a bridegroom, and has adorned me with finery as a bride. And as the earth makes its flower grow, and as a garden makes its seeds spring up, so the Lord, the Lord, will cause righteousness to spring up, and rejoicing, before all the nations.” (Isaiah 61:10) The soul of our Lord Jesus Christ is the one of which he said, “My soul is deeply grieved,” (Matthew 26:38) and “Now my soul is troubled.” (John 12:27) It rejoices and is glad in none of the created things, but in the Father and Lord alone. For the garment of deity clothed him, and the tunic of true and perfect gladness. He was also the bridegroom of the church, the bride who has no spot or wrinkle, and for this reason the turban was set on her as on a bridegroom. And the bride belongs to the deity that is raised high above all blame, and he adorned her as a bride with the adornment that suits the Spirit of the Lord. He also cultivated her as a fruitful and good land, and as a garden growing and flourishing with the shoots in it, with which the great paradise of God is also said to be planted. The text says these things will be so because the Lord is righteous, and is God not only of the Jews but also of the nations. He has caused his own righteousness to spring up, that is, his Christ, before all the nations that believe through him.

Psalm 33. “Raise a signal for the nations. For see, the Lord has made it heard to the end of the earth. Say to the daughter of Zion: See, your savior has come, having his own reward with him, and his work before his face. And he will call him a holy people, redeemed by the Lord. And you will be called a city sought after, and not forsaken.” (Isaiah 62:10) “Who is this who has come from Edom, with the redness of his garments from Bosor? So beautiful in his robe, in forceful strength? I speak righteousness and a judgment of salvation. Why are your garments red, and your clothing like that of one who has trodden a full winepress? I am full of what has been trampled, and of the nations there was no man with me, and I trampled them in my anger.” (Isaiah 63:1) Here again the prophecy commands us to take up a signal for the church from the nations, promising that the Lord will make something heard to the end of the earth. This has reached its fulfillment at the coming of our Savior Jesus, when the sound of his apostles went out into all the earth, and their words to the ends of the world. Next it says: “Say to the daughters of Zion,” that is, to the churches from the nations. For these would be daughters of the heavenly Zion, who is our mother, according to the apostle. “See, your savior is coming, having his own reward with him” (Galatians 4:26) and what follows. By these words the second coming of Christ is made clear, when he will come as judge to give each person the wages for their present labors, and to repay now each person for the wicked things he has done. Next, as though asking a question, the text says: “Who is this who comes from Edom, with the redness of his garments (which is translated ‘earthy’), the redness of his garments from Bosor?”

“So beautiful in his robe.” He seems to say this in wonder that even after becoming man, after emptying himself, after living on earth, after the suffering and the descent to the dead, the Savior is still beautiful and radiant. His beauty was not marred in any way. He took on no filth, stain or blemish from the material and bodily condition of earthly, human affairs. The prophet is also struck with awe at his strength, for he fought down the whole army of

the devil. He goes on: "So beautiful in his robe, with force and might?" To this question the Savior answers, teaching who he is, and says, "I speak righteousness and a judgment of salvation." Then the word speaks to him again, as if because of the suffering: "Why are your garments red?" and what follows. As the Lamb of God, who took the sins of the world upon himself, he put on garments reddened by our sins. This is why Zechariah the prophet says, "And Jesus was clothed in filthy garments." These were the garments made of our sins. For that reason it was said a little earlier, "This man bears our sins and is pained for us," although he himself "committed no sin, nor was deceit found in his mouth." Again the Savior answers the question and teaches where his garments became red: from the nations. Without any human being working with him, he alone subjected these nations, by trampling down the whole opposing power of the evil spirits that were hostile to him.

Psalm 34. "And the Lord remembered the days of old; he who brought up out of the earth the great shepherd of the sheep, who put the Holy Spirit in them." Who else could be the one the Lord brought up out of the earth, the shepherd of God's sheep, but our Savior, who came for the lost sheep of the house of Israel? For he is the good shepherd, who laid down his life for the sheep. The Father brought him up out of the earth and raised him to the highest place, giving him the name that is above every name.

Psalm 35. "The city of your holy one has become a desert. Zion has become like a desert, Jerusalem a curse. Our holy house, and the glory which our fathers blessed, has been burned with fire. All our glorious things have fallen in ruins. And after all this you held back, Lord, and kept silent, and humbled us exceedingly. I became visible to those who were not asking for me. I was found by those who were not seeking me. I said, 'Here I am,' to a nation that did not call on my name. But I spread out my hands all day long to a disobedient and contrary people, who did not walk in a true way, but after their own sins." Here too, the rejection of Israel is first prophesied, and next the choosing of the nations through Christ is shown. The prophet sends up a prayer in the person of the people, and the Word answers, exposing the hardness and disobedience of the former people and showing his own love for mankind. "How can you say these things," he says, "as though I were slow to save you? Indeed, to those who did not ask me and did not seek me, I openly showed myself."

It is quite clear how the Word of God, who was formerly unknown to the nations, became visible to them at the end of the ages, through the goodness and love for mankind of the Father and God of all. Because of the error they held about idols, they had never asked him about the things they needed. He was found by us, who had not sought him. Though we had not even called on his name, he became man and answered, all but crying out, "Here I am." So the passage clearly prophesies about the calling of the nations. Then it turns again to the people of the Jews and, in a most shaming way, says, "But I spread out my hands to you, to a disobedient and contrary people." Through these words the shape of his suffering on the cross can also be indicated. That is all for the passages from Isaiah. In these four books I have outlined the subject of the Extracts, within this ninth treatise of the General

Elementary Introduction. In the tenth I will try to offer another fitting approach to those whose reasoning has been damaged by godless heresies.

Sources. Greek text: Thomas Gaisford's edition (Eusebii Pamphili Episcopi Caesariensis Eclogae Propheticae, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1842), digitised by Open Greek and Latin and the First Thousand Years of Greek project (CC BY-SA 4.0). The English is a new translation made by SermonIndex with AI directly from the Greek, as a first reading version; it has not been checked line by line by a person and may contain mistakes. No older English translation was used. Where the digital Greek is flagged as damaged, the English is a best reading. Released under CC BY-SA 4.0.